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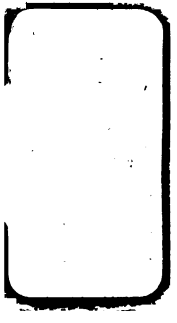

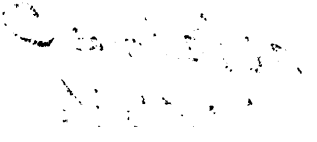

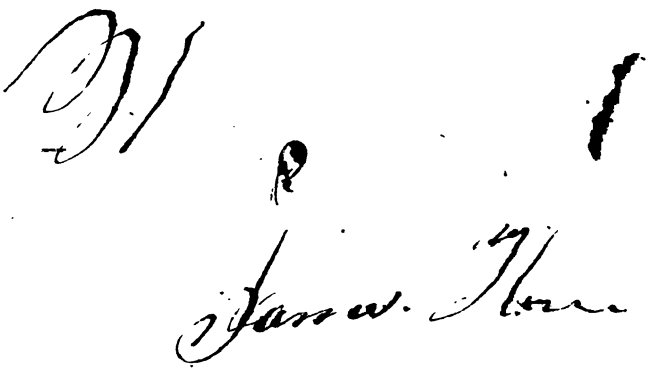

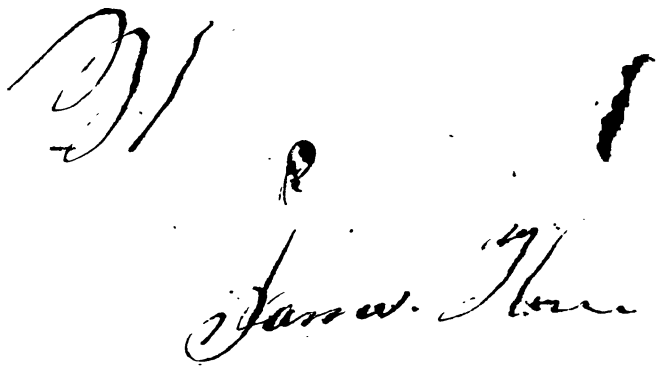

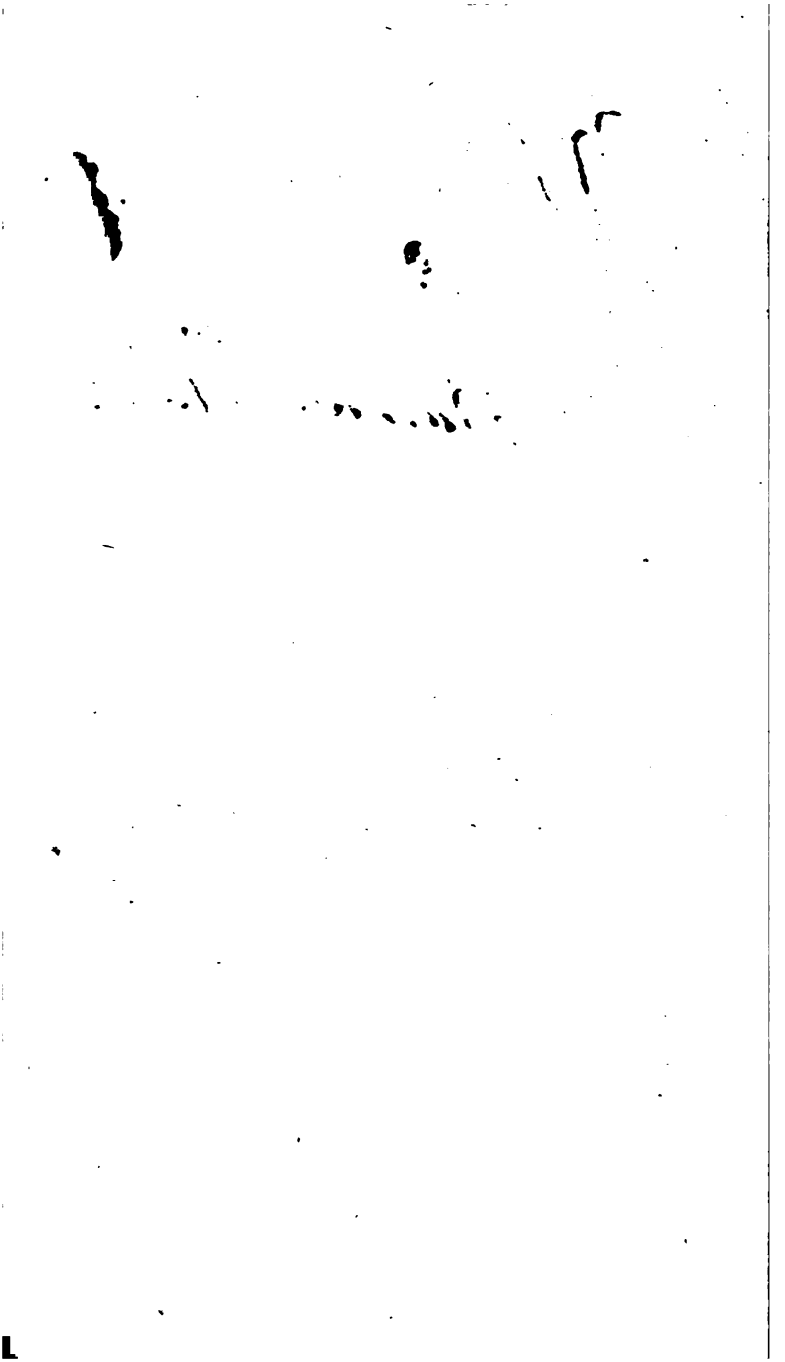

THE MISER;

OR,

THE CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA.

BY

WILLIAM CARLETON,

AUTHOR OF "NEAL MALONE," "TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY," "FATHER BUTLER," &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY & HART.

1840.

THE NEW YORK
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FARDOROUGHA THE MISER;

OR,

THE CONVICTS OF LISNAMONA.

CHAPTER I.

After they had departed, Connor sat down upon his hard pallet, and, supporting his head with his hand, saw, for the first time in all its magnitude and horror, the death to which he found himself doomed. The excitement occasioned by his trial, and his increasing firmness, as that sad event darkened on through all its stages, to the final sentence, had now in a considerable degree abandoned him, and left his heart at present more accessible to natural weakness that it had been to the power of his own affections. The image of his early-loved Una had seldom since his arrest been out of his imagination. Her youth, her beauty, her wild but natural grace, and the flashing glances of her dark, enthusiastic eye, when joined to her tenderness and boundless affection for himself—all caused his heart to quiver with deadly anguish through every fibre. This produced a transition to Flanagan, the contemplation of whose perfidious vengeance made him spring from his seat in a paroxysm of indignant but intense hatred, so utterly furious that the swelling tempest which it

sent through his veins caused him to reel with absolute giddiness.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "you are just, and will this be suffered?"

He then thought of his parents, and the fiery mood of his mind changed to one of melancholy and sorrow. He looked back upon his aged father's enduring struggle; upon the battle of the old man's heart against the accursed vice which had swayed its impulses so long; on the protracted conflict between the two energies, which, like contending armies in the field, had now left little but ruin and desolation behind them. His heart, when he brought all these things near him, expanded, and, like a bird, folded its wings about the gray-haired martyr, for such indeed he was, to the love he bore him. But his mother, the caressing, the proud, the affectionate, whose heart, in the vivid tenderness of hope for her beloved boy, had shaped out his path in life, as that on which she could brood with the fondness of a loving and delighted spirit—that mother's image, and the idea of her sorrows, prostrated his whole strength, like that of a stricken infant, to the earth.

"Mother, mother," he exclaimed, "when I think of what you reared me for, and what I am this night, how can my heart do otherwise than break, as well on your account as my own, and for all that love us! Oh! what will become of you, my blessed mother! Hard does it go with you that you're not about '*your pride*,' as you used to call me, now that I'm in this trouble, in this fate that is soon to cut me down from your loving arms! the thought of you is dear to my heart, dear, dearer, dearer than that of any—than my own Una. What will become of *her*, too, and the old man? Oh, why, why is it that the death I am to suffer is to fall so heavily on them that love me best?"

He then returned to his bed, but the cold and dreary images of death and ruin haunted his imagination, until

the night was far spent, when at length he fell into a deep and dreamless sleep.

By the sympathy expressed at his trial, our readers may easily conceive the profound sorrow which was felt for him, in the district where he was known, from the moment the knowledge of his sentence had gone abroad among the people. This was much strengthened by that which, whether in man or woman, never fails to create an amiable prejudice in its favour; I mean youth and personal beauty. His whole previous character was now canvassed with a mournful lenity that brought out his virtues into beautiful relief; and the fate of the affectionate son was deplored no less than that of the youthful, but rash and inconsiderate lover. Neither was the father without his share of compassion, for they could not forget that, despite of all his penury and extortion, the old man's heart had been fixed with a strong but uncouth affection upon his amiable and only boy. It was, however, when they thought of his mother, in whose heart of hearts he had been enshrined as the idol of her whole affection, that their spirits became truly touched. Many a mother assumed in her own person, by the force of imagination, the sinking woman's misery, and poured forth, in unavailing tears, the undeniable proofs of the sincerity with which she participated in Honor's bereavement.

As for Flanagan, a deadly weight of odium, such as is peculiar to the *informer* in Ireland, fell upon both him and his. Nor was this all. Aided by that sagacity which is so conspicuous in Irishmen, when a vindictive or hostile feeling is excited among them, they depicted Flanagan's character with an accuracy and truth astonishingly correct and intuitive. Numerous were the instances of cowardice, treachery, and revenge, remembered against him, by those who had been his close and early companions, not one of which would have ever occurred to them, were it not that their minds had been thrown back upon the scrutiny by the melancholy fate

in which he had involved the unhappy Connor O'Donovan. Had he been a mere ordinary witness in the matter, he would have experienced little of this boiling indignation at their hands; but first to participate in the guilt, and afterward, for the sake of the reward, or from a worse and more flagitious motive, to turn upon him, and become his accuser, even to the taking away of the young man's *life—to stag* against his companion and accomplice—this was looked upon as a crime ten thousand times more black and damnable than that for which the unhappy culprit had been consigned to so shameful a death,

But, alas, of what avail was all this sympathy and indignation to the unfortunate youth himself, or to those most deeply interested in his fate? Would not the very love and sorrow felt toward her son fall upon his mother's heart with a heavier weight of bitterness and agony? Would not his Una's soul be wounded on that account with a sharper and more deadly pang of despair and misery? It would, indeed, be difficult to say whether the house of Bodagh Buie or that of Fardorougha was then in the deeper sorrow.

On the morning of Connor's trial Una arose at an earlier hour than usual, and it was observed, when she sat at breakfast, that her cheek was at one moment pale as death, and again flushed and feverish. These symptoms were first perceived by her affectionate brother, who, on observing the mistakes she made in pouring out the tea, exchanged a glance with his parents, and afterward asked her to allow him to take her place. She laid down the teapot, and looking him mournfully in the face, attempted to smile at a request so unusual.

"Una dear," said he, "you must allow me. There is no necessity for attempting to conceal what you feel —we all know it—and if we did not, the fact of your having filled the sugar-bowl instead of the teacup would soon discover it."

She said nothing, but looked at him again, as if she

scarcely comprehended what he said. A glance, however, at the sugar-bowl convinced her that she was incapable of performing the usual duties of the breakfast-table. Hitherto she had not raised her eyes to her father's or her mother's face, nor spoken to them, as had been her wont, when meeting at that strictly domestic meal. The unrestrained sobbings of the mother now aroused her for the first time, and on looking up she saw her father wiping away the big tears from his eyes.

"Una, avourneen," said the worthy man, "let John make tay for us, for, God help you, you can't do it. Don't fret, achora machree, don't, don't, Una; as God is over me, I'd give all I'm worth to save him for your sake."

She looked at her father, and smiled again; but that smile cut him to the heart.

"I will make tea myself, father," she replied, "and I *won't* commit any more mistakes."

"Avourneen," said the mother, "let John do it; acushla machree, let him do it."

She then rose, and without uttering a word, passively and silently placed herself on her brother's chair; he having, at the same time, taken that on which she sat.

"Una," said her father, taking her hand, "you must be a good girl, and you must have courage; and whatever happens, my darling, you'll pluck up strength, I hope, and bear it."

"I hope so, father," said she, "I hope so."

"But, avourneen machree," said her mother, "I would rather see you cryin' fifty times over, than smilin' the way you do."

"Mother," said she, "my heart is sore—my heart is sore."

"It is, ahagur machree; and your hand is tremblin' so much that you can't bring the taycup to your mouth; but, then, don't smile so sorrowfully, *anein machree*."

"Why should I cry, mother?" she replied; "I know

that Connor is innocent. If I knew him to be guilty I would weep, and I ought to weep."

"At all events, Una," said her father, "you know it's the government and not us that's prosecuting him."

To this Una made no reply, but, thrusting away her cup, she looked with the same mournful smile from one to another of the little circle about her. At length she spoke.

"Father, I have a request to ask of you."

"If it's within my power, Una darling, I'll grant it; and if it's not, it'll go hard with me but I'll bring it within my power. What is it, asthore machree?"

"In case *he's* found guilty, to let John put off his journey to Maynooth, and stay with *me* for some time—it won't be long I'll keep him."

"If it pleases you, darling, he'll never put his foot into Maynooth again."

"No," said the mother, "*dhamnho* to the step, if you don't wish him."

"Oh, no, no," said Una, "it's only for a while."

"Unless she desires it, I will *never* go," replied the loving brother; "nor will I ever leave you in sorrow, my beloved and only sister—never—never—so long as a word from my lips can give you consolation."

The warm tears coursed each other down his cheeks as he spoke, and both his parents, on looking at the almost blighted flower before them, wept as if the hand of death had already been upon her.

"You, father, and John, are going to his trial," she observed; "for me I like to be alone, alone; but when you return to-night, let John break it to me. I'll go now to the garden. I'll walk about to-day—only before you go, John, I want to speak to you."

Calmly and without a tear, she then left the parlour, and proceeded to the garden, where she began to dress and ornament the hive which contained the swarm that Connor had brought back to her on the day their mutual attachment was first disclosed to each other.

"Father," said John, when she was gone, "I am afraid that Una's heart is broken, or, if not broken, that she won't survive his conviction long—it's breaking fast; for my part, in her present state, I neither will nor can leave her."

The affectionate father made no reply, but putting his handkerchief to his eyes, wept, as did her mother, in silent but bitter grief.

"I cannot speak about it, nor think of it, John," said he, after some time, "but we must do what we can for her."

"If anything happens her," said the mother, "I'd never get over it. Oh, marciful Saviour! how could we live widout her?"

"I would rather see her in tears," said John; "I would rather see her in outrageous grief a thousand times, than in the calm but ghastly resolution with which she is bearing herself up against the trial of this day. If he's condemned to death, I'm afraid that either her health or reason will sink under it, and, in that case, God pity her and us, for how, how, as you say, mother, could we afford to lose her? Still let us hope for the best. Father, it's time to prepare; get the car ready. I am going to the garden to hear what the poor thing has to say to me, but I will be with you soon."

Her brother found her, as we have said, engaged calmly, and with a melancholy pleasure, in adorning the hive, which, on Connor's account, had become her favourite. He was not at all sorry that she had proposed this short interview, for as his hopes of Connor's acquittal were but feeble, if, indeed, he could be truly said to entertain any, he resolved, by delicately communicating his apprehensions, gradually to prepare her mind for the worst that might happen.

CHAPTER II.

On hearing her brother's step, she raised her head, and advancing toward the middle of the garden, took his arm, and led him toward the summer-house, in which Connor and she had first acknowledged their love. She gazed wistfully upon it after they entered, and wrung her hands, but still shed no tear.

"Una," said her brother, "you had something to say to me; what is it, darling?"

She glanced timidly at him, and blushed.

"You won't be angry with me, John," she replied; "would it be proper for me to——to go——"

"What! to be present at the trial? Dear Una, you cannot think of it. It would neither be proper nor prudent; and you surely would not be considered indelicate? Besides, even were it not so, your strength is unequal to it. No, no, Una dear; dismiss it from your thoughts."

"I fear I could not stand it, indeed, John, even if it were proper; but I know not what to do; there is a weight like death upon my heart. If I could shed a tear it would relieve me; but I cannot."

"It is probably better you should feel so, Una, than entertain hopes upon the matter that may be disappointed. It is always wisest to prepare for the worst, in order to avoid the shock that may come upon us, and which always falls heaviest when it comes contrary to our expectations."

"I do not at all feel well," she replied, "and I have been thinking of the best way to break this day's tidings to me, when you come home. If he's cleared, say,

good humouredly, 'Una, all's lost;' and if—if not, oh, desire me—say to me, 'Una, you had better go to bed, and let your mother go with you;' *that* will be enough; I will go to bed, and if ever I rise from it again, it will not be from a love of life."

The brother, seeing that conversation on the subject of her grief only caused her to feel more deeply, deemed it better to terminate than to continue a dialogue which only aggravated her sufferings.

"I trust and hope, dear Una," he said, "that you will observe my father's advice, and make, at least, a worthy effort to support yourself, under what certainly is a heavy affliction to you, in a manner becoming your own character. For his sake—for my mother's sake, and for mine too, endeavour to have courage; be firm; and, Una, if you take my advice, you'll pray to God to strengthen you; for, after all, there's no support in the moment of distress and sorrow like His."

"I will take your advice," she replied; "but is it not strange, John, that such heavy misfortune should fall upon two persons so young, and who deserve it so little?"

"It may be a trial sent for your advantage and his; who can say but it may yet end for the good of you both? At present, indeed, there is no probability of its ending favourably, and even should it not, we are bound to bear with patience such dispensations as the Great Being to whom we owe our existence, and of whose ways we know so little, may think right to lay upon us. Now, God bless you and support you, dear, till I see you again. I must go; don't you hear the jaunting-car coming up the gate? be firm, dear Una, be firm, and good-by."

Never was a day spent under the influence of a more terrible suspense than that which drank up the strength of this sinking girl during the trial of her lover. Actuated by a burning and restless sense of distraction, she passed from place to place with that mechanical

step which marks those who seek for comfort in vain. She retired to her apartment and strove to pray ; but the effort was fruitless ; the confusion of her mind rendered connexion and continuity of thought and language impossible. At one moment she repaired to the scenes where they had met, and again, with a hot and aching brain, left them with a shudder that arose from the withering conception of the loss of him whose image, by their associations, was at once rendered more distinct and more beloved. Her poor mother frequently endeavoured to console her, but became too much affected herself to proceed. Nor were the servants less anxious to remove the heavy load of sorrow which weighed down her young spirit to the earth. Her brief but affecting reply was the same to each.

" Nothing can comfort me ; my heart is breaking ; oh, leave me—leave me to the sorrow that's upon me."

Deep indeed was the distress felt on her account, even by the females of her father's house, who that day shed many tears on witnessing the mute but feverish agony of her sufferings. As evening approached she became evidently more distracted and depressed ; her head, she said, felt hot, and her temples occasionally throbbed with considerable violence. The alternations of colour on her cheek were more frequent than before, and their pallid and carmine hues were more alarmingly contrasted. Her weeping mother took the stricken one to her bosom, and after kissing her burning and passive lips, pressed her temples, with a hope that this might give her relief.

" Why don't you cry, *anien machree?* (daughter of my heart). Thry and shed tears ; it'ill take away this burnin' pain that's in your poor head ; oh, thry an' let down the tears, an' you'll see how it 'll relieve you."

" Mother, I can't," she replied ; " I can shed no tear ; I wish they were home, for the worst couldn't be worse than this."

"No, asthore, it couldn't—it can't; husth! do you hear it? There they are; that's the car; ay, indeed, it's at the gate."

They both listened for a moment, and the voices of her father and brother were distinctly heard giving some necessary orders to the servant.

"Mother, mother," exclaimed Una, pressing her hands upon her heart, "my heart is bursting, and my temples—my temples—"

"Chierna yeelish," said the mother, feeling its strong and rapid palpitations, "you can't stand this! Oh, darlin' of my heart, for the sake of your own life, an' of the livin' God, be firm."

At this moment their knock at the hall-door occasioned her to leap, with a sudden start, almost out of her mother's arms. But, all at once, the tumult of that heart ceased, and the vermilion of her cheek changed to the hue of death. With a composure, probably more the result of weakness than fortitude, she clasped her hands, and giving a fixed gaze toward the parlour-door, that spoke the resignation of despair, she awaited the tidings of her lover's doom. They both entered, and after a cautious glance about the room, immediately perceived the situation in which, reclining on her mother's bosom, she lay, ghastly as a corpse, before them.

"Una dear," said John, approaching her, "I am afraid you are ill."

She riveted her eyes upon him, as if she would read his soul, but she could not utter a syllable.

The young man's countenance became overshadowed by a deep and mournful sense of the task he found himself compelled to perform; his voice faltered and his limbs trembled, as, in a low tone of heartfelt and profound sympathy, he exclaimed,

"*Una dear, you had better go to bed, and let my mother stay with you.*"

Calmly she heard him, and rising, she slowly but deliberately left the room, and proceeded up stairs with a degree of steadiness which surprised her mother. The only words she uttered, on hearing this blighting communication, were, "Come with me, mother."

"Una darling," said the latter, when they had reached the bedroom, "why don't you spake to me? Let me hear your voice, jewel; only let me hear your voice."

Una stooped and affectionately kissed her, but made no reply for some minutes. She then began to undress, which she did by fits and starts; sometimes pausing in evident abstraction for a considerable time, and again resuming the task of preparing for bed.

"Mother," she at length said, "my heart is as cold as ice; but my brain is burning; feel my temples, how hot they are, and how they beat."

"I do, alanna dheelish; your body, as well as your mind, is sick; but we'll sind for the docthor, darlin', and you'll soon be bether, I hope."

"I hope so; and then Connor and I can be married in spite of them. Don't they say, mother, that marriages are made in Heaven?"

"They do, darlin'."

"Well, then, I will meet him there. Oh, my head, my head; I cannot bear—bear this racking pain."

Her mother, who, though an uneducated woman, was by no means deficient in sagacity, immediately perceived that her mind was beginning to exhibit symptoms of being unsettled. Having, therefore, immediately called one of the maid-servants, she gave her orders to stay with Una, who had now gone to bed, until she herself could again return to her. She instantly proceeded to the parlour, where her husband and son were, and, with a face pale from alarm, told them that she feared Una's mind was going.

"May the Almighty forbid," exclaimed her father,

laying down his knife and fork; for they had just sat down to dinner; "oh, what makes you say such a thing, Bridget? what on earth makes you think it?"

"For Heaven's sake, mother, tell us at once," said the son, rising from the table and walking distractedly across the room.

"Why, she's beginnin' to rave about him," replied her mother; "she's afther sayin' that she'll be married to him in spite o' them."

"In spite o' who, Bridget?" asked the Bodagh, wiping his eyes; "in spite o' who does she mane?"

"Why, I suppose, in spite o' Flanagan and thim that found him guilty," replied his wife.

"Well, but what else did she say, mother?"

"She axed me if marriages warn't made in Heaven, and I tould her that the people said so; upon that she said she'd meet him there, an' then she complained of her head. The trewth is, she has a heavy load of sickness on her back, an' the sorra hout should be lost till we get a docthor."

"Yes, that *is* the truth, mother; I'll go this moment for Doctor H——. There's nothing like taking these things in time. Poor Una! God knows this trial is a sore one upon a heart so faithful and affectionate as hers."

"John, had you not betther ait something before you go?" said his father; "you want it afther the troublesome day you had."

"No, no," replied the son; "I cannot, I cannot; I will neither eat nor drink till I hear what the doctor will say about her. Oh, my God," he exclaimed, while his eyes filled with tears, "and is it come to this with you, our darling Una? I won't lose a moment till I return," he added, as he went out; "nor will I, under any circumstances, come without medical aid of some kind."

"Let these things be taken away, Bridget," said the Bodagh; "my appetite is gone too; that last news is the worst of all. May the Lord of Heaven keep our

child's mind right; for oh, Bridget, wouldn't death itself be far afore *that?*"

"I'm going up to her," replied his wife; "and may Jasus guard her, and spare her safe and sound to us! For what—what kind of a house would it be if she—but I can't think of it. Oh, wurrah, wurrah, this night!"

Until the return of their son with the physician, both O'Brien and his wife hung in a state of alarm bordering on agony over the bed of their beloved daughter. Indeed, the rapidity and vehemence with which incoherence, accompanied by severe illness, set in, were sufficient to excite the greatest alarm, and to justify their darkest apprehensions. Her skin was hot almost to burning; her temples throbbed terribly, and such were her fits of starting and raving, that they felt as if every minute were an hour, until the physician actually made his appearance. Long before this gentleman reached the house, the son had made him fully acquainted with what he looked upon as the immediate cause of her illness; not that the doctor himself had been altogether ignorant of it; for indeed there were few persons of any class or condition in the neighbourhood to whom that circumstance was unknown.

On examining the diagnostics that presented themselves, he pronounced her complaint to be brain fever of the most formidable class, to wit: that which arises from extraordinary pressure upon the mind, and unusual excitement of the feelings. It was a relief to her family, however, to know that beyond the temporary mental aberrations inseparable from the nature of her complaint, there was no evidence whatsoever of insanity. They felt grateful to God for this, and were consequently enabled to watch her sick-bed with more composure, and to look forward to her ultimate recovery with a hope less morbid and gloomy. In this state we are now compelled to leave them and her, and to beg the reader will accompany us to another house of sorrow, where the mourning was still more deep, and the

spirits that were wounded driven into all the wild and dreary darkness of affliction.

Our readers cannot have forgotten the helpless state of intoxication in which Fardorougha left his unhappy son on the evening of the calamitous day that saw him doomed to an ignominious death. His neighbours, as we then said, having procured a car, assisted him home, and would, for his wife's and son's sake, have afforded him all the sympathy in their power; he was, however, so completely overcome with the spirits he had drank, and an unconscious latent feeling of the dreadful sentence that had been pronounced upon his son, that he required little else at their hands than to keep him steady on the car. During the greater part of the journey home, his language was only a continuation of the incoherences which Connor had, with such a humiliating sense of shame and sorrow, beheld in his prison-cell. A little before they arrived within sight of his house, his companions perceived that he had fallen asleep; but to a stranger, ignorant of the occurrences of the day, the car presented the appearance of a party returning from a wedding, or from some other occasion equally festive and social. Most of them were the worse of liquor, and one of them in particular had reached a condition which may be too often seen in this country. I mean that in which the language becomes thick; the eye knowing, but vacant; the face impudent, but relaxed; the limbs tottering, and the voice inveterately disposed to melody. The general conversation, therefore, of those who accompanied the old man was, as is usual with persons so circumstanced, high and windy; but as far as could be supposed by those who heard them, cheerful and amicable. Over the loudness of their dialogue might be heard, from time to time, at a great distance, the song of the drunken melodist just alluded to, rising into those desperate tones which borrow their drowsy energy from intoxication alone. Such was the character of those who ac-

companied the miser home; and such were the indications conveyed to the ears or eyes of those who either saw or heard them, as they approached Fardorougha's dwelling, where the unsleeping heart of the mother watched—and oh, with what a dry and burning anguish of expectation, let our readers judge—for the life or death of the only child that God had ever vouchsafed to that loving heart on which to rest all its tenderest hopes and affections.

The manner in which Honor O'Donovan spent that day was marked by an earnest and simple piety that would have excited high praise and admiration if beheld in a person of rank or consideration in society. She was, as the reader may remember, too ill to be able to attend the trial of her son, or, as she herself expressed it in Irish, "to draw strength to her heart by one look at his manly face; by one glance from her boy's eye." She resolved, however, to draw consolation from a higher source, and to rest the burden of her sorrows, as far as in her lay, upon that Being by whom alone support can be given; or if she descended from the elevation of true worship, to supplicate the intercession of departed spirits, let us attribute this rather to the dogmas of her creed than the errors of her heart. From the moment her husband left the threshold of his childless house on that morning, until his return, her prayers to God and the saints were truly incessant. And who is so well acquainted with the inscrutable ways of the Almighty, as to dare assert that the humble supplications of this pious and sorrowful mother were not heard and answered? Whether it was owing to the fervour of an imagination, wrought upon by the influence of a creed which nourishes religious enthusiasm in an extraordinary degree, or whether it was by direct support from that of God who compassionated her affliction, let others determine; but certain it is, that in the course of that day she gained a calmness and resignation, joined to an increased fortitude of heart, such as she had not hoped to feel under a calamity so black and terrible.

On hearing the approach of the car which bore her husband home, and on listening to the noisy mirth of those who, had they been sober, would have sincerely respected her grief, she put up an inward prayer of thanksgiving to God for what she supposed to be the happy event of Connor's acquittal. Stunning was the blow, however, and dreadful the revulsion of feeling, occasioned by the discovery of this sad mistake. When she reached the door she felt still farther persuaded that all had ended as she wished, for to nothing else, except the wildness of unexpected joy, could she think of ascribing her husband's intoxication.

"We must carry Fardorougha in," said one of them to the rest; "for the liquor has fairly overcome him; he's sound asleep."

"He is cleared," exclaimed the mother; "my son is cleared! My heart tells me he has come out without a stain. What else could make his father, that never tasted liquor for the last thirty years, be as he is?"

"Honor O'Donovan," said one of them, wringing her hand as he spoke, "this has been a black day to you all; you must prepare yourself for bad news."

"Thin Christ and his blessed mother support me, and support us all! but what is the worst? oh! what is the worst?"

"The *bharradh dhu*,"* replied the man, alluding to the black cap which the judge puts on when passing sentence of death.

"Well," said she, "may the name of the Lord that sent this upon us, be praised for ever! That's no rason why we shouldn't still put our trust and reliance in him. I will show them, by the help of God's grace, an' by the assistance of his blessed mother, who suffered herself, an' oh! what is my sufferings to hers? I will show them, I say, that I can bear, as a Christian

* Literally, the black cap.

ought, whatever hard fate it may plase the Saviour of the earth to lay upon us. I am sure my son is innocent, an' surely, although it's hard, hard to part with such a boy, yet it's a consolation to know that he'll be better wid God, who is takin' him, than ever he'd be wid us. So the Lord's will be done this night and for ever! amin!"

This noble display of glowing piety and fortitude was not lost upon those who beheld it. After uttering these simple but exalted sentiments, she crossed herself devoutly, as is the custom, and bowed her head with such a vivid sense of God's presence, that it seemed as if she actually stood, as no doubt she did, under the shadow of his power. These men, knowing the force of her love to that son, and the consequent depth of her misery at losing him by a death so shameful and violent, reverently took off their hats as she bent her head to express this obedience to the decrees of God, and in a subdued tone and manner exclaimed, almost with one voice,

"May God pity you, Honor; for who but yourself would or could act as you do this bitther, bitther night!"

"I'm only doin' what I ought to do," she replied; "what is religion good for, if it doesn't keep the heart right, an' support us undher thrials like this, what 'ud it then be but a name? But how, oh how, came *his* father to be in sich a state on this bitther, bitther night, as you say it is; an' oh! heaven above sees it's that—how came *his* father, I say, into such a state?"

They then related the circumstance as it actually happened; and she appeared much relieved to hear that his inebriety was only accidental.

"I am glad," she said, "that he got it as de did; for, indeed if he had made himself dhrunk this day, as too many like him do on sich occasions, he never again would appear the same man in my eyes, nor would my

heart ever more warm to him as it did. But thanks be to God that he didn't take it of himself."

She then heard, with a composure that could result only from fortitude and resignation united, a more detailed account of her son's trial, after which she added,

"As God is above me this night, I find it easier to lose Connor than to forgive the man that destroyed him; but this is a bad state of heart, that I trust my Saviour will give me grace to overcome; an' I know he will if I ax it as I ought; at all evints, I won't lay my side on a bed this night until I pray to God to forgive Bartle Flanagan, an' to turn his heart."

She then pressed them with a spirit as hospitable as it was pious, to partake of food, which they declined, from a natural reluctance to give trouble where the heart is known to be pressed down by the violence of domestic calamity. These are distinctions which our humble countrymen draw with a delicacy that may well shame those who move in a higher rank of life. Respect for unmerited affliction, and sympathy for the sorrows of the just and virtuous, are never withheld by the Irish peasant when allowed by those who can guide him, either for good or evil, to follow the impulses of his own heart. The dignity, for instance, of Honor O'Donovan's bearing under a trial so overwhelming in its nature, and the piety with which she supported it, struck them, half tipsy as they were, so forcibly, that they became sobered down, some of them into a full perception of her firmness and high religious feeling; and those who were more affected by drink, into a maudlin gravity of deportment, still more honourable to the admirable principles of the woman who occasioned it.

One of the latter, for instance, named Bat Hanratty, exclaimed, after they had bade her good night, and expressed their unaffected sorrow for the severe loss she was about to sustain.

"Well, well, you may all talk; but, be the powdhers

o' delf, nothin' barrin' the downright grace o' God could sup—sup-port that dacent mother of ould Fardorougha, I mane of his son, poor Connor. But the truth is, you see, that there's nothin', nothin', no, the divil saize the hap'orth at all, good, bad, or indifferent, aquil to puttin' your trust in God; bekaise, you see, Con Roach, I say, bekaise, you see, when a man does that as he ought to do it; for it's all *faisthelagh* if you go the wrong way about it; but Con—Condy, I say, you're a dacent man; an' it stands to raison, it does, boys, upon my sowl, it does. It wasn't for nothin' that money was lost upon myself, when I was takin' in the edjiggation; and, maybe, if Connor O'Donovan, that's now goin to suffer, poor fellow,

'For the villain swore away my life, an' all by parjur*ee*;
And for that same I die wid shame upon the gallows tree.'

So, as I was sayin', why didn't Connor come in an' *join the boys** like another, an' then we could settle Bartle for *staggin'* against him. For you see, in regard o' that, Condy, it doesn't signify a traneen whether he put a match to the haggard or not; the thing is, your know, that even if he did, Bartle darn't swear against him widout breaking his first oath to the boys; an' if he did it afther that, an' brought any of them into throuble conthrairy to the Articles, be gorra, sure he'd be entitled to get a gusset opened undher one o' his ears, any how. But you see, Con, be the book—God pardon me for swearin'—but be the book, the mother has the thrue ralligion in her heart, or she'd never stand it the way she does, an' that proves what I was expoundin'; that afthur all, the sorra hap'orth aquil to the grace o' God. I can repate the *Confiteor*† in Latin myself, an' upon my sowl, I find that afthur a hard day's fightin'

* Become a Ribandman.

† The *Confiteor*, a Latin confession of sin, addressed by Roman Catholics to God and the Saints.

or drinkin' it aises my mind all to pieces. Sure they say one bout of it in Latin is worth half a dozin rosaries; for, you see, the Latin bein' the mother tongue in heaven, that's what gives sich power entirely to prayers that's offered up in that langridge, an' what makes our clargy so powerful beyant all others."

He then sang a comic song, and having passed an additional eulogium on the conduct of Honor O'Donovan, concluded by exhibiting some rather unequivocal symptoms of becoming pathetic from sheer sympathy; after which the soporific effect of his libations soon hushed himself into a snore that acted as a base to the shrill tones in which his companions addressed one another from each side of the car.

CHAPTER III.

FARDOROUGHA, ever since the passion of avarice had established its accursed dominion in his heart, narrowed by degrees his domestic establishment, until, toward the latter years of his life, it consisted of only a labouring boy, as the term is, and a servant girl. Indeed, no miser ever was known to maintain a large household: and that for reasons too obvious to be detailed. Since Connor's incarceration, however, his father's heart had so far expanded, that he hired two men as inside servants,* one of them now the father of a large family, being the identical Nogher M'Cormick, who, as the reader remembers, was in his service at the period of Connor's birth. The other was a young man named Thady Star, or Reillaggan, as it is called in Irish, who was engaged upon the recommendation of Biddy Nulty, then an established favourite with her master and mistress, in consequence of her faithful devotion to them and Connor, and her simple-hearted participation in their heavy trouble. The manner in which they received the result of her son's trial was not indeed calculated to sustain his mother. In the midst of the clamour, however, she was calm and composed; but it would have been evident to a close observer that a deep impression of religious duty alone sustained her, and that the yearnings of the mother's heart, though stilled by resignation to the Divine Will, were yet more intensely agonized by the suppression of what she secretly felt. Such, however, is the motive of those heroic acts of self-denial,

* That is, labourers who board and lodge in the family.

which religion only can enable us to perform. It does not harden the heart, or prevent it from feeling the full force of the calamity or sorrow which comes upon us; no, but while we experience it in all the rigour of distress, it teaches us to reflect that suffering is our lot, and that it is our duty to receive these severe dispensations in such a manner as to prevent others from being corrupted by our impatience, or by our open want of submission to the decrees of Providence. When the agony of the Man of Sorrows was at its highest, he retired to a solitary place, and while every pore exuded water and blood, he still exclaimed, "Not my will, but thine be done." Here was resignation indeed, but at the same time a heart exquisitely sensible of all it had to bear. And much, indeed, yet lay before that of the pious mother of our unhappy hero, and severe was the trial which, on this very night, she was doomed to encounter.

When Fardorougha awoke, which he did not do until about three o'clock in the morning, he looked wildly about him, and, starting up in the bed, put his two hands on his temples, like a man distracted by acute pain; yet anxious to develope in his memory the proceedings of the foregoing day. The inmates, however, were startled from their sleep by a shriek, or rather a yell, so loud and unearthly that, in a few minutes, they stood collected about his bed. It would be impossible, indeed, to conceive, much less to describe, such a picture of utter horror as then presented itself to their observation. A look that resembled the turbid glare of insanity was fixed upon them while he uttered shriek after shriek, without the power of articulating a syllable. The room, too, was dim and gloomy; for the light of the candle that was left burning beside him had become ghastly for want of snuffing. There he sat, his fleshless hands pressed against his temples; his thin, gray hair standing out wildly from his head; his lips asunder; and his cheeks sucked in so far that the chasms occasioned in

his jawbones, by the want of his back teeth, were plainly visible.

"Chiernah dheelish," exclaimed Honor, "what is this? as heaven's above me, I believe he's dyin'; see how he gasps. Here, Fardorougha," she exclaimed, seizing a jug of water which had been left on the chair beside him, but which he evidently had not seen, "here, here, darlin', wet your lips; the cool wather will refresh you."

He immediately clutched the jug with eager and trembling hands, and at one rapid draught emptied it to the bottom.

"Now," he shouted, "I can spake, now I can spake. Where's my son? where's my son? an' what has happened *me?* how did I come here? was I mad? am I mad? but tell me, tell me first, where's Connor? Is it thrue? is it all thrue? or is it me that's mad?"

"Fardorougha, dear," said his wife, "be a man, or, rather, be a Christian. It was God gave Connor to us, and who has a betther right to take him back from us? Don't be flyin' in His face, bekase he won't ordher everything as you wish. You haven't taken off of you to-night; so rise, dear, and calm yourself; then go to your knees, lift your heart to God, and beg of him to grant you strinth and patience. Thry that coorse, avourneen, an' you'll find it the best."

"How did I come home, I say? oh, tell me, Honor, tell me, was I out o' my wits?"

"You fainted," she replied; "and thin they gave you whiskey to support you; an' not bein' accustomed to it, it got into your head."

"Oh, Honor, our son! our son!" he replied; then, starting out of the bed in a fit of the wildest despair, he clasped his hands together, and shrieked out, "Oh, our son, our son, our son Connor! Merciful Saviour, how will I name it? to be hanged by the neck! Oh, Honor, Honor, don't you pity me? Mother of heaven, this

night! That *barradh dhu*, that *barradh dhu* put on for our boy, our innocent boy; who can undherstand it, Honor? It's not justice; there's no justice in heaven, or my son wouldn't be murdhered, slaughtered down in the prime of his life, for no rason. But no matther; let him be taken; only hear this—if he goes, I'll never bend my knee to a single prayer while I've life; for it's terrible, it's cruel, 'tisn't justice; nor do I care what becomes of me, either in this world or the other. All I want, Honor, is to folly *him* as soon as I can; my hopes, my happiness, my life, my everything is gone wid him; an' what need I care thin what becomes of me? I don't, I don't."

The faces of the domestics grew pale as they heard, with silent horror, the incoherent blasphemies of the frantic man; but his wife, whose eyes were riveted on him while he spoke, and while he paced, with a hurried step, up and down the room, felt at a loss whether to attribute his impiety to an attack of insanity, or to a temporary fever brought on by his late sufferings, and the intoxication of the preceding night.

"In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Fardorougha," she said calmly, placing her hand upon his shoulder, "are you sinsible that you're this minute afther blasphemin' your Creator?"

He gave her a quick, disturbed, and peevish look; but made no reply. She then proceeded:

"Fardorougha, I thought the loss of Connor the greatest punishment that could be put upon me; but I find I was mistaken. I would rather see him dead to-morrow, wid the rope about his neck, than to hear his father blasphemin' the livin' God! Fardorougha, it's clear that you're not now fit to pray for yourself, but in the name of our Saviour, I'll go an' pray for you. In the manetime go to bed; sleep will settle your head, and you will be better, I trust, in the mornin'."

The calm solemnity of her manner awed him, notwithstanding the vehemence of his grief. He stood and

looked at her, with his hands tightly clasped, as she went to her son's bedroom in order to pray for him. For a moment he seemed abashed and stunned. While she addressed him, he involuntarily ceased to utter those sounds of anguish, which were neither shrieks nor groans, but something between both. He then resumed his pace, but with a more settled step, and for some minutes maintained perfect silence.

"Get me," said he, at length, "get me a drink of water; I'm in a flame wid drouth."

When Biddy Nulty went out to fetch him this, he inquired of the rest what Honor meant by charging him with blasphemy.

"Surely I didn't blaspheme," he said, peevishly; "no, no, I'm not that bad; but, any how, let her pray for me; *her* prayer will be heard, if ever woman's was."

When Biddy returned, he emptied the jug of water with the same trembling eagerness as before; then clasped his hands again, and commenced pacing the room, evidently in a mood of mind about to darken into all the wildness of his former grief.

"Fardorougha," said Nogher M'Cormick; "I was undher this roof the night your manly son was born. I remimber it well; and I remimber, more betoken, I had to check you for flyin' in the face o' God that sent him to you. Instead o' feelin' happy and delighted, as you ought to a' done, an' as any other man but yourself would, you grew dark an' sulky, and grumbled bekase you thought there was a family comin'. I tould you that night to take care an' not be committin' sin; an' you may remimber, too, that I gev you chapther and verse for it out o' Scripthur: 'Vo be to the man that's born wid a millstone about his neck, espeshilly if he's to be cast into the say.' The thruth is, Fardorougha, you warn't thankful to God for him; and you see that, afther all, it doesn't do to go to loggerheads wid the Almighty. Maybe, had you been thankful for him, he

wouldn't be where he is this night. Millstone! Faith, it was a home thrust that same verse; for if you didn't carry the millstone about your neck, you had it in your heart; and you now see and feel the upshot. I'm now goin' fast into age myself; my hair is grayer than your own, and I could take it to my death," said the honest fellow, while a tear or two ran slowly down his cheek, "that, exceptin' one o' my own childhre; and may God spare them to me; I couldn't feel more sorrow at the fate of any one livin' than at Connor's. Many a time I held him in these arms, and many a little play I made for him, an' many a time he axed me why his father didn't nurse him as I did; 'bekase,' he used to say, 'I would rather he would nurse me nor anybody else, barring my mother; an' afther him, you, Nogher.'"

These last observations of his servant probed the heart of the old man to the quick; but the feeling which they excited was a healthy one; or, rather, the associations they occasioned threw Fardorougha's mind upon the memory of those affections which avarice had suppressed, without destroying.

"I loved him, Nogher," said he, deeply agitated; "oh, none but God knows how I loved him, although I didn't an' couldn't bring myself to show it at the time. There was something upon me; a curse, I think, that prevented me; an', now that I love him as a father ought to do, I will not have him. Oh, my son, my son, what will become of me, after you? Heavenly Father, pity me and support me! Oh, Connor, my son, my son, what will become of me!"

He then sat down on the bed, and placing his hands upon his face, he wept long and bitterly. His grief now, however, was natural, for during the most violent of his paroxysms in the preceding hour, he shed not a tear; yet now they ran down his cheeks and through his fingers in torrents.

"Cry on, cry on," said Nogher, wiping his own

eyes; "it will lighten your heart; an' who knows but it's his mother's prayers that brought you to yourself, and got this relief for you. Go, Biddy," said he, in a whisper to the servant-maid, "and tell the misthress to come here; she'll know best how to manage him, now that he's a little calm."

"God be praised," ejaculated Honor, on seeing him weep; "these tears will cool your head, avourneen; an' now, Fardorougha, when you're tired cryin', if you take my advice, you'll go to your knees, an' offer up five Pathers, five Aves, an' a Creed, for the grace of the Almighty to direct and strengthen you; and thin, afther that, go to bed, as I sed, an' you'll find how well you'll be afther a sound sleep."

"Honor," replied her husband, "avourneen machree, I think you'll save your husband's sowl yet, undher my merciful Saviour."

"Your son, undher the same merciful God, will do it. Your heart was hard and godless, Fardorougha, and surely, if Connor's death 'ill be the manes of savin' his father's sowl, wouldn't it be a blessin' instead of a misfortuue? Think of it in that light, Fardorougha, and turn your heart to God. As for Connor, isn't it a comfort to know that the breath won't be out of his body till he's a bright angel in heaven?"

The old man wiped his eyes, and knelt down, first having desired them to leave him. When the prayers were recited, he called in Honor.

"I'm afeard," said he, "that my heart wasn't properly *in* them, for I couldn't prevent my mind from wanderin' to our boy."

This touching observation took the mother's affections by surprise. A tear started to her eye, but after what was evidently a severe struggle, she suppressed it.

"It's not at once you can do it, Fardorougha; so don't be cast down. Now, go to bed, in the name of God, and sleep; and may the Lord in heaven support

you, and support us both; for, oh, it's we that want it this night of sorrow."

She then stooped down, and affectionately kissed him, and having wished him good night, she retired to Connor's bed, where, ever since the day of his incarceration, this well-tried mother and enduring Christian had slept.

At this stage of our story we will pause for a moment to consider the state of mind and comparative happiness of the few persons who are actors in our humble drama.

To those capable of observing only human action, independently of the motives by which it is regulated, it may appear that the day which saw Connor O'Donovan consigned to a premature and shameful death, was one of unmingled happiness to Bartle Flanagan. They know little of man's heart, however, who could suppose this to be the case, or who could even imagine that he was happier than those on whom his revenge and perfidy had entailed such a crushing load of misery. It is, indeed, impossible to guess what the nature of that feeling must be which arises from the full gratification of mean and diabolical malignity. Every action of the heart at variance with virtue and truth is forced to keep up so many minute and fearful precautions, all of which are felt to be of vast moment at the time, that we question if ever the greatest glut of vengeance produced, no matter what the occasion may have been, any satisfaction capable of counterbalancing all the contingencies and apprehensions by which the mind is distracted both before and after its perpetration. The plan and accomplishment must both be perfect in all their parts, for if either fail only in a single point, all is lost, and the pleasure arising from them resembles the fruit which is said to grow by the banks of the Dead Sea, it is beautiful and tempting to the eye, but bitterness and ashes to the taste.

The failure of the county treasurer, for instance, de-

the conviction of a criminal, are so similar to each other, that we feel it, even in this case, unnecessary to do more than give a mere sketch of Connor's brief life as a culprit. We have just observed that the only clause in the judge's charge which smote the heart of the traitor Flanagan with a presentiment of evil, was that containing the words in which something like a hope of having Connor's sentence mitigated was held out to him, in consequence of the recommendation to mercy by which the jury accompanied their verdict. It is very strange, on the other hand, that at the present stage of our story, neither his father nor mother knew anything whatsoever of the judge having given expression to such a hope. The old man, distracted as he was at the time, heard nothing, or at least remembered nothing, but the awful appearance of the black cap, or, as they term it in the country, the *barradh dhu*, and the paralyzing words in which the sentence of death was pronounced upon his son. It consequently happened that the same clause in the charge already noticed, positively occasioned the misery of Bartle Flanagan on the one hand, and negatively of Connor's parents on the other.

The morning after the trial, Fardorougha was up as early as usual, but his grief was nearly as vehement and frantic as on the preceding night. It was observed, however—such is the power of sorrow to humanize and create sympathy in the heart—that when he arose, instead of peevishly and weakly obtruding his grief and care upon those about him, as he was wont to do, he now kept aloof from the room in which Honor slept, from an apprehension of disturbing her repose; a fact which none who knew his previous selfishness would have believed had he not himself expressed in strong terms a fear of awakening her. Nor did this new trait of his character escape the observation of his own servants, especilly of his honest monitor, Nogher M'Cormick.

"Well, well," exclaimed this rustic philosopher, "see what God's affliction does. Faith, it has brought Fardo-

rougha to feel a trifle for *others*, as well as for *himself*. Who knows, begad, but it may take the millstone out of his heart yet? and if it does, my word to you, he may thank his wife, undher God, for it."

Before leaving home that morning to see his son, he found with deep regret that Honor's illness had been so much increased by the events of the preceding day, that she could not leave her bed. And now, for the first time, a thought loaded with double anguish struck upon his heart.

"Saver of earth!" he exclaimed, "what would become of me if both should go and lave me alone? Ay, ay," he continued, "I see it. I see how asily God might make my situation still worse than I thought it *could* be. Oh God, forgive me my sins! and may God soften my heart! Amin!"

He then went to see his wife ere he set out for his unhappy son; and it was with much satisfaction that Honor observed a changed and chastened tone in his manner, which she had never, except for a moment at the birth of his child, noticed before. Not that his grief was much lessened, but it was more rational, and altogether free from the violence and impiety which had characterized it when he awoke from his intoxication.

"Honor," said he, "how do you find yourself this mornin', alanna? They tell me you're worse than you wor yestherda."

"Indeed, I'm wake enough," she replied, "and very much bate down, Fardorougha; but you know it's not our own stringth at any time that we're to depend upon, but God's. I'm not willin' to attempt anything beyant my power at present. My seeing him now would do neither of us any good, and might be his mother's death. I must see him, to be sure, and I'll strive, plase God, to gather up a little strength for *that*."

"My heart's breakin', Honor, and I'm beginnin' to see I've acted a bad part to both of you all along. I feel

it, indeed; and if it was the will o' God, I didn't care if—"

"Whisht, acushla, whisht; sich talk as that's not right. Think, Fardorougha, whether you acted a bad part toward God or not, and never heed us; an' think too, dear, whether you acted a bad or a good part toward the poor, an' them that was in distress and hardship, an' that came to you for relief—they were your fellow-crathers, Fardorougha, at all evints. Think of these things, I'm sayin', and never heed us. You know that Connor and I forgive you, but you arn't so sure whether God and them will."

These observations of this inestimable woman had the desired effect, which was, as she afterward said, to divert her husband's mind as much as possible from the contemplation of Connor's fate, and to fix it upon the consideration of those duties in which she knew his conscience, now touched by calamity, would tell him he had been deficient.

Fardorougha was silent for some time after her last observations; but at length he observed:

"Would it be possible, Honor, that all this was brought upon us in ordher to punish me for—for—"

"To punish *you*, Fardorougha! *Fareer gairh, avourneen*, arn't we *all* punished? look at my worn face, and think of what ten days' sorrow can do in a mother's heart; think, too, of the boy. Oh no, no—do you think we have nothin' to be punished for? But we have all one comfort, Fardorougha, and that is, that God's ever and always willin' to resave us, when we turn to him wid a true heart. Nobody, avillish, can forget and forgive as he does."

"Honor, why didn't you oftener spake to me this-a-way than you did?"

"I often did, dear, an' you may remember it; but you were then strong; you had your wealth; everything flowed wid you, an' the same wealth—the world's temptation—was strong in your heart; but God has taken it

from you, I hope as a blessing—for indeed, Fardorougha, I'm afeard if you had it now, that neither he nor—but I won't say it, dear, for God he sees I don't wish to say one word that 'ud distress you now, avourneen. Any how, Fardorougha, never despair in God's goodness—never do it; who can tell what may happen?"

Her husband's grief was thus checked, and a train of serious reflection laid, which, like some of those self-evident convictions that fasten on the awakened conscience, the old man could not shake off.

Honor, in her farther conversation with him, touching the coming interview with the unhappy culprit, desired him, above all things, to set "their noble boy" an example of firmness, and by no means to hold out to him any expectation of life.

"It would be worse than murdher," she exclaimed, "to do so. No, prepare him by your advice, Fardorougha, ay, and by your example, to be firm—and tell him that his mother expects he will die like an innocent man—noble and brave—not like a guilty coward, afeard to look up and meet his God."

Infidels and hypocrites, so long as their career in vice is unchecked by calamity, will no doubt sneer when we assure them, that Fardorougha, after leaving his wife that morning once more to visit his son, felt a sense of relief, or perhaps we should say, a breaking of faint light upon his mind, which, slight as it was, afforded him more comfort and support than he ever hoped to experience. Indeed, it was almost impossible for any heart to exist within the influence of that piety which animated his admirable wife, and not catch the holy fire which there burned with such purity and brightness.

Ireland, however, abounds with such instances of female piety and fortitude, not, indeed, as they would be made to appear in the unfeminine violence of political turmoil, in which a truly pious female would not embroil herself; but in the quiet recess of domestic life—in the hard struggles against poverty, and in those

cruel visitations, where the godly mother is forced to see her innocent son corrupted by the dark influence of political crime, drawn within the vortex of secret confederacy, and subsequently yielding up his life to the outraged laws of that country which he assisted to distract. It is in scenes like these the unostentatious magnanimity of the pious Irish wife or mother may be discovered; and it is here where, as the night and storms of life darken her path, the holy fortitude of her heart shines with a lustre proportioned to the depth of the gloom around her.

When Fardorougha reached the town in which his ill-fated son occupied the cell of a felon, he found, to his surprise, that early as were his habits, there were others whose movements were still more early than his own. John O'Brien had come to town—been with his attorney—had got a memorial in behalf of Connor to the Irish government engrossed and actually signed by more than one half of the jury who tried him—all before the hour of ten o'clock. A copy of this document, which was written by O'Brien himself, now lies before us, with the names of all the jurors attached to it; and a more beautiful or affecting piece of composition we have never read. The energy and activity of O'Brien were certainly uncommon, and so, indeed, were his motives. As he himself told Fardorougha, whom he met as the latter entered the town,

"I am doing what I can for Connor, although I have never yet exchanged a syllable with him. Still, I do assure you, Fardorougha, that I have other motives—which you shall never know—far stronger than any connected with the fate of your son. Now, don't misunderstand me."

"No," replied the helpless old man, who was ignorant of the condition of O'Brien's sister, "I will not indeed; I'd be long sarry."

O'Brien saw that any rational explanation he might give would only be thrown away upon a man who

seemed to be so utterly absorbed and stupified by the force of his own sufferings.

"Poor old man," he exclaimed, as Fardorougha left him to visit Connor, "see what affliction does! There are thousands now who pity you—even *you*, whom almost every one who knew you cursed and detested."

Such, indeed, was the fact. The old man's hardness of heart was forgotten in the pity that was produced by the dreadful fate which awaited his unhappy son. We must now pass briefly over occurrences which are better understood when left to the reader's imagination. John O'Brien was not the only one who interested himself in the fate of Connor. Fardorougha, as a matter of course, got the priest of the parish, a good and pious man, to draw up a memorial in the name, as he said, of himself and his wife. The gentry of the neighbourhood also, including the members of the grand jury, addressed government on his behalf; for somehow there was created among those who knew the parties, or even who heard the history of their loves, a sympathy which resulted from those generous impulses that intuitively perceive truth, than from the cooler calculations of reason. The heart never reasons; it is therefore the seat of feeling and the fountain of mercy; the head does, and it is probably on that account the seat of justice, often of severity, and not unfrequently of cruelty and persecution. Connor himself was much relieved by that day's interview with his father. Even he could perceive a change for the better in the old man's deportment. Fardorougha's praises of Honor, and his strong allusions to the support and affection he experienced at her hands, under circumstances so trying, were indeed well calculated to prepare her "noble boy," as she truly called him, for the reception of the still more noble message which she sent him.

"Father," said he, as they separated that day, "tell my mother that I will die as she wishes me; and tell her, too, that if I wasn't an innocent man I could not do

it. And oh, father," he added, and he seized his hands, and fell upon his neck, "oh, father dear, if you love me, your own Connor—and I know you do—oh, then, father dear, I say again, be guided in this heavy affliction by my dear mother's advice."

"Connor," returned the old man, deeply affected, "I will. I had made my mind up to that afore I saw you at all to-day. Connor, do you know what I'm beginnin' to think?"

"No, father dear, I do not."

"Why, then, it's this, that she'll be the manes of savin' your father's soul. Connor, I can look back now upon my money—all I lost—it was no doubt terrible—terrible all out—Connor, my rint is due, and I haven't the manes of meetin' it."

Alas, thought the boy, how hard is it to root altogether out of the heart that principle which inclines it to the love of wealth.

"At any rate, I will take your advice, Connor, and be guided by your mother. She's very poorly, or she'd be wid you afore now; but, indeed, Connor, her health is the occasion of it—it is—it is!"

Fardorougha's apology for his wife contained much more truth than he himself was aware of at the time he made it. On returning home that night, he found her considerably worse, but as she had been generally healthy, he very naturally ascribed her illness to the affliction she felt for the fate of her son. In this, however, he was mistaken, as the original cause of it was unconnected with the heavy domestic dispensation which had fallen upon them. So far as she was concerned, the fate of her boy would have called up from her heart fresh energy, and, if possible, a higher order of meek but pious courage. She would not have left him unsustained and uncherished, had the physical powers of the mother been able to second the sacred principles with which she met and triumphed over the trial that was laid upon her.

CHAPTER IV.

It was one evening about ten days after O'Donovan's conviction that Bodagh Buie O'Brien's wife sat by the bedside of her enfeebled and languishing daughter. The crisis of her complaint had passed the day before; and a very slight improvement, visible only to the eye of her physician, had taken place. Her delirium remained much as before; sometimes returning with considerable violence, and again leaving reason, though feeble and easily disturbed, yet when unexcited by external causes, capable of applying its powers to the circumstances around her. On this occasion the mother, who watched every motion and anticipated every wish of the beloved one, saw that she turned her eye several times upon her, as if some peculiar anxiety distressed her.

"Una, jewel," she at length inquired, "is there anything you want, *colleen machree?* or any thing I can do for you?"

"Come near me, mother," she replied, "come near me."

Her mother approached her still more nearly.

"I'm afraid," she said in a very low voice, "I'm afraid to ask it."

"Only wait for a minute or two," said her mother, "an' John will—but here's the docthor's foot; they wor spakin' a word or two below; an' whisper, darlin' o' my heart, sure John has something to tell you—something that will—"

She looked with a searching anxiety into her mother's face; and it might have been perceived that the

morning twilight of hope beamed faintly but beautifully upon her pale features. The expression that passed over them was indeed so light and transient that one could scarcely say she smiled; yet that a more perceptible serenity diffused its gentle irradiation over her languid countenance was observed even by her mother.

The doctor's report was favourable.

"She is slowly improving since yesterday," said he, on reaching the parlour; "I am afraid, however, she's too weak at present to sustain this intelligence. I would recommend you to wait for a day or two, and in the mean time to assume a cheerful deportment, and break it to her rather by your looks and manner than by a direct or abrupt communication."

They promised to observe his directions; but when her mother informed them of the hint she herself threw out to her, they resolved to delay the matter no longer; and John, in consequence of what his mother had led her to expect, went to break the intelligence to her as well as he could. An expectation had been raised in her mind, and he judged properly enough that there was less danger in satisfying it than in leaving her just then in a state of such painful uncertainty.

"Dear Una," said he, "I am glad to hear the doctor say that you are better."

"I think I am a little," said she.

"What was my mother saying to you, just now before the doctor was with you? But why do you look at me so keenly, Una," said he, cheerfully; "it's some time since you saw me in such good humour—isn't it?"

She paused for a moment herself; and her brother could observe that the hope which his manner was calculated to awaken, lighted itself into a faint smile rather visible in her eyes than on her features.

"Why, I believe your are smiling yourself, Una."

"John," said she, earnestly, "is it good?"

"It is darling—*he won't die.*"

"Oh! kiss me, kiss me," she said, "and may eternal blessings rests upon you!"

She then kissed him affectionately, laid her head back upon the pillow, and John saw with delight that the large tears of happiness rolled in torrents down her pale cheeks.

It was indeed true that Connor O'Donovan was not to die. The memorials which had reached government from so many quarters, backed as they were by very powerful influence, and detailing as they did a case of such very romantic interest, could scarcely fail in arresting the execution of so stern and deadly a sentence. It was ascertained, too, by the correspondence of his friends with government, that the judge who tried his case, notwithstanding the apparent severity of his charge, had been moved by an irresistible impulse to save him; and he actually determined from the beginning to have his sentence commuted to transportation for life.

The happy effect of this communication on Una O'Brien diffused a cheerful spirit among her family and relatives, who, in truth, had feared that her fate would ultimately depend upon that of her lover. After having been much relieved by the copious flood of tears she shed, and head with composure all the details connected with the mitigation of his sentence, she asked her brother if Connor's parents had been yet made acquainted with it.

"I think not," he replied; "the time is too short."

"John," said the affectionate girl, "oh, consider his mother; and think of the misery that one single hour's knowledge of this may take away from her heart. Go to her, my dear John, and may all the blessings of Heaven rest upon you!"

"Good-by, then, Una dear; I will go."

He took her worn hand in his, as he spoke, and looking on her with affectionate admiration, added,

"Yes! good-by, my darling sister; believe me, Una,

that I think if there's justice in heaven you'll have a light heart yet."

"It is very light now," she returned, "compared with what it was; but go, John, don't lose a moment; *for I know what they suffer.*"

Her mother, after John's departure for Fardorougha's, went to sit up with her; but she found that the previous scene, although it relieved, had exhausted her. In the course of a few minutes their limited dialogue ceased, and she sank into a sound and refreshing sleep, from which she did not awaken until her brother had some time returned from the execution of his pious message. And piously was the message received by her for whose misery the considerate heart of Una O'Brien felt so deeply.

Fardorougha had been out about the premises, mechanically looking to the manner in which the business of his farm had been of late managed by his two servants, when he described O'Brien approaching the house at a quick if not a hurried pace. He immediately went in and communicated the circumstance to his wife.

"Honor," said he, "here is Bodagh Buie's son comin' up to the house—what on earth can bring the boy here?"

This was the first day on which his wife had been able to rise from her sick bed. She was consequently feeble; and, physically speaking, capable of no domestic exertion. Her mind, however, was firm as ever, and prompt as before her calamity, to direct and overlook in her own sweet and affectionate manner, whatever required her superintendence.

"I'm sure I don't know, Fardorougha," she replied. "It can't, I hope, be wid bad news—that thravels fast enough—an' I'm sure the Bodagh's son wouldn't take pleasure in bein' the first to tell it to us."

"But what can bring him, Honor? What on earth can bring the boy here now that never stood undher our roof afore?"

"Three or four minutes, Fardorougha, will tell us. Let us hope in God it isn't bad. Eh, it wouldn't be the death of his sister—of Connor's Oona? No," she added, "they wouldn't send, much less come, to tell us that, but sure we'll hear it—we'll hear it; and may God give us stringth to hear it right, whether it's good or bad! Amin, Jasus, this day!"

She had hardly uttered the last words when O'Brien entered.

"Young man," said this superior woman, "it's a poor welcome we can give you to a house of sorrow."

"Ay," said Fardorougha, "his mother an' I's here, but where is *he*? Nine days from this—but it'll kill me —it will—it will. Whin he's taken from me I don't care how soon I folly him; God forgive me if it's a sin to say so!"

"Fardorougha," said his wife, in a tone of affectionate reproof, "remimber what you promised me, an', at all events, you forget that Mr. O'Brien here may have his own troubles; I hard your sister was unwell. Oh, how is she, poor thing?"

"I thank you, a great deal better; I will not deny but she heard a piece of intelligence this day, that has relieved her mind and taken a dead weight off her heart."

Honor, with uncommon firmness and solemnity of manner, placed her hand upon his shoulder, and, looking him earnestly in the face, said,

"That news is about our son?"

"It is," replied O'Brien, "and it's good; his sentence is changed, and he's not to die."

"Not to die!" shrieked the old man, starting up, and clapping his hands franticly, "not to die! our son— Connor, Connor—not to be hanged—not to be hanged! did you say that, son of O'Brien Buie—did you?—did you?"

"I did," replied the other; "he will not suffer."

"Now that's God!" ejaculated Fardorougha, wildly;

"that's God—an' his mother's prayers. Boys," he shrieked, "come here; come here, Biddy Nulty, come here; Connor's not to die! he won't suffer—he won't suffer!"

He was rushing wildly to the door, but Honor placed herself before him, and said, in that voice of calmness which is uniformly that of authority and power,

"Fardorougha dear, calm yourself. If this is God's work, as you say, why not resave it as comin' from God; it's upon your two knees you ought to drop, an'—Saver above, what's the matther wid him!—He's off; keep him up! Oh, God bless you; that's it, avourneen; jist place him on the chair there forninst the door, where he can have air. Here, dear," said she to Biddy Nulty, who, on hearing herself called by her master, had come in from another room. "Get some feathers, Biddy, till we burn them under his nose; "but first fetch a jug of could wather."

On looking at the face of the miser, O'Brien started, as indeed well he might, at such a pallid, worn, and death-like countenance; why, thought he to himself, surely this must be death, and the old man's cares, and sorrows, and hopes, are all passed away for ever.

Honor now bathed his face, and wet his lips with water, and as she sprinkled and rubbed back the gray hair from his emaciated temples, there might be read there an expression of singular wildness that resembled the wreck produced by insanity.

"He looks ill," observed O'Brien, who actually thought him dead; "but I hope it won't signify."

"I trust in God's mercy it won't," replied Honor; "for till his heart, poor man, is brought more to God—"

She paused with untaught delicacy, for she reflected that he was her husband.

"For that matther, who is there," she continued, "that is fit to go to their last account at a moment's warnin'? That's a good girl, Biddy; give me the feathers; there's nothin' like them. *Dheah Grasthias!*

Dheah Grasthias!"* she exclaimed, "he's not gone—he's not—an' I was afeard he *was*—but no, he *is* recoverin'. Shake him, rouse him a little; Fardorougha, dear!"

"Where—where am I?" exclaimed her husband. "What's this? what ails me?"

He then looked inquiringly at his wife and O'Brien; but it appeared that the presence of the latter revived in his mind the cause of his excitement.

"Is it—is it thrue, young man? tell me—tell me!"

"How, dear, can any one have spirits to tell you good news, when you can't bear it aither like a man or a Christian?"

"Good news, you say! Then it's thrue, an' he's not to be hanged by the neck, as the judge said; an' my curse—my heavy curse upon him for a judge!"

"I hate myself to hear the words of his sentence, Fardorougha," said the wife; "but if you have patience you'll find that his life's granted to him; an' for Heaven's sake, curse nobody. The judge only did his duty."

"Well," he exclaimed, sinking upon his knees, "now, from this day out, let what will happen, I'll stick to my duty to God—I'll repint—I'll repint an' lead a new life. I will, an' while I'm alive I'll never say a word aginst the will of my Heavenly Saviour; never, never!"

"Fardorougha," replied his wife, "it's good no doubt to have a grateful heart to God; but I'm afeard there's sin in what you're sayin', for you know, dear, that, whether it pleased the Almighty to take our boy or not, what you've promised to do is your duty. It's like sayin', I'll now turn my heart *bekase God has deserved it at my hands*. Still, dear, *I'm* not goin' to condimn you, only I think it's betther and safer to love an' obey God for his own sake, blessed be his holy name!"

Young O'Brien was forcibly struck by the uncommon

* Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God!

character of Honor O'Donovan. Her patience, good sense, and sincere acquiesence in the will of God, under so severe a trial, were such as he had never seen equalled. Nor could he help admitting to himself, while contemplating her conduct, that the example of such a woman was not only the most beautiful comment on religious truth, but the noblest testimony of its power.

"Yes, Honor," said the husband, in reply, "you're right, for I know that what you say is always thrue. It is indeed," he added, addressing O'Brien, "she's aquil to a prayer-book."

"Yes, and far superior to any," replied the latter; "for she not only gives you the advice, but sets you the example."

"Ay, the sorra lie in it; an', oh, Honor, he's not to die—he's not to be han—not to suffer. Our son's to live! Oh, Saver of earth, make me thankful this day!"

The tears ran fast from his eyes as he looked up to heaven, and uttered the last words. Indeed, it was impossible not to feel deep compassion for this aged man, whose heart had been smote so heavily, and on the only two points where it was capable of feeling the blow.

After having indulged his grief for some time, he became considerably more composed, if not cheerful. Honor made many kind inquiries after Una's health, to which her brother answered with strict candour, for he had heard from Una that she was acquainted with the whole history of their courtship.

"Who knows," said she, speaking with reference to their melancholy fate, "but the God who has saved his life, an' most likely hers, may yet do more for them both; while there's life there's hope."

"Young man," said Fardorougha, "you carry a blessin' wid you wherever you go, an' may God bless you for the news you have brought to us this day. I'll go to see him to-morrow, an' wid a light heart I'll go too, for my son is not to die."

O'Brien then took his leave and returned home, pondering, as he went, upon the singular contrast which existed between the character of the miser and that of his admirable wife. He was no sooner gone that Honor addressed her husband as follows:

"Fardorougha, what do you think we ought both to do now after the happy news we've hard?"

"I'll be guided by you, Honor; I'll be guided by you."

"Then," said she, "go an' thank God that hast aken the edge, the bitther keen edge off of our sufferin'; and the best way, in my opinion, for you to do it, is to go to the barn by yourself, and strive to put your whole heart into your prayers. You'll pray betther by yourself than wid me. An' in the name of God I'll do the same as well as I can in the house here. To-morrow, too, is Friday, an' plaise our Saviour, we'll both fast in honour of his goodness to us an' to our son."

"We will, Honor," said he, "we will, indeed; for now I have spirits to fast, and spirits to pray, too. What will I say, now? Will I say the five Dickens (Decades) or the whole Rosary?"

"If you can keep your mind in the prayers, I think you ought to say the whole of it; but if you wandher, don't say more than the five."

Fardorougha then went to prayer, rather because his wife desired him than from a higher motive, while she withdrew to her own apartment, there humbly to worship God in thanksgiving.

The next day had made the commutation of Connor's punishment a matter of notoriety through the whole parish, and very sincere indeed was the gratification it conveyed to all who heard it. Public fame, it is true, took her usual liberties with the facts. Some said he had got a free pardon, others that he was to be liberated after six months' imprisonment; and a third report asserted that the lord lieutenant sent him down a hundred pounds to fit him out for marriage with Una; and

it farther added that his excellency wrote a letter with his own hand to Bodagh Buie, desiring him to give his daughter to Connor on receipt of it, or, if not, that the Knight of the Black Rod would come down, strip him of his property, and bestow it upon Connor and his daughter.

The young man himself was almost one of the first who heard of this favourable change in his dreadful sentence.

He was seated on his bedside reading, when the sheriff and jailer entered his cell, anxious to lay before him the reply which had that morning arrived from government.

"I'm inclined to think, O'Donovan, that your case is likely to turn out more favourably than we expected," said the humane sheriff.

"I hope, with all my heart, it may," replied the other; "there's no denying, sir, that I'd wish it. Life is sweet, especially to a young man of my years."

"But if we should fail," observed the jailer, "I trust you will act the part of a man."

"I hope, at all events, that I will act the part of a Christian," returned O'Donovan. "I certainly would rather live; but I'm not afeard of death; and if it comes, I trust I will meet it humbly but firmly."

"I believe," said the sheriff, "you need entertain little apprehension of death; I'm inclined to think that that part of your sentence is not likely to be put in execution. I have heard as much."

"I think, sir, by your manner, that you have," returned Connor; "but I beg you to tell me without goin' about. Don't be afeard, sir, that I'm too wake to hear either good news or bad."

The sheriff made no reply, but placed in his hands the official document which remitted to him the awful penalty of his life. Connor read it over slowly, and the other kept his eye fixed keenly upon his countenance, in order to observe his bearing under circumstances

that are often known to try human fortitude as severely as death itself. He could, however, perceive no change; not even the unsteadiness of a nerve or muscle was visible, nor the slightest fluctuation in the hue of his complexion.

"I feel grateful to the lord lieutenant for his mercy to me," said he, handing the sheriff back the letter, "as I do to the friends who interceded for me; I never will or can forget their goodness. Oh never, never!"

"I believe it," said the sheriff; "but there's one thing that I am anxious to press upon your attention; and it's this, that no farther mitigation of your punishment is to be expected from government; so that you must make up your mind to leave your friends and your country for life, as you now know."

"I expect nothing more," returned Connor, "except this, that the hand of God may yet bring the guilt of the burning home to the man that committed it, and prove my innocence. I'm *now* not without some hope that sich a thing may be brought about, somehow. I thank you, Misther Sheriff, for your kindness in coming to me with this good news so soon; all I can say is, that I thank you from my heart. I am bound to say, too, that any civility and comfort that could be shown was afforded me ever since I came here, an' I feel it, an' I am grateful for it."

Both were deeply impressed by the firm tone of manly sincerity and earnestness with which he spoke, blended as it was by a melancholy which gave, at the same time, a character of elevation and pathos to all he said. They then shook hands with him, after chatting some time on indifferent subjects, the jailer promising to make his situation, while he remained in prison, as easy as the regulations would allow him; "or who knows," he added, smiling, "but we might make them a little easier."

"That's a fine young fellow," said he to the sheriff, after they had left him.

"He is a gentleman," replied the sheriff, "by nature a gentleman; and a very uncommon one too. I defy a man to doubt a word that comes out of his lips; all he says is impressed with the stamp of truth itself; and by Jove, I feel certain he never committed the felony he's in for. Keep him as comfortable as you can."

They then separated.

The love of life is the first and strongest principle in our nature, and what man is there, except some unhappy wretch pressed down by long and galling misery to the uttermost depths of despair, who, knowing that life was forfeited, whether justly or not matters little, to the laws of his country, will not feel the mercy which bids him live with a corresponding sense of gratitude. The son of the pious mother acted as if she were still his guide and monitress.

He knelt down and poured out *his* gratitude to that Being who had the first claim upon it, and whose blessing he fervently invoked upon the heads of those true friends by whose exertions and influence he now felt that life was restored to him.

Of his life while he remained in this country there is little more to be said than what is usually known to occur in the case of other convicts similarly circumstanced, if we except his separation from the few persons who were dear to him. He saw his father the next day, and the old man felt almost disappointed on discovering that he was deprived of the pleasure which he proposed to himself of being the bearer of such glad tidings to him. Those who visited him, however, noticed, with a good deal of surprise, that he appeared as if labouring under some secret anxiety, which, however, no tact or address on their part could induce him to disclose. Many of them, actuated by the best motives, asked him in distinct terms why he appeared to be troubled; but the only reply they received was a good-humoured remark that it was not to be expected he could leave for ever all that was dear to him on earth with a very cheerful spirit.

It was at this period that his old friend Nogher M'Cormick came to pay him a visit; being the last time, as he said, that he would ever have an opportunity of seeing his face. Nogher, whose moral impressions were by no means so correct as Connor's, asked him, with a face of dry, peculiar mystery, if he had any particular wish unfulfilled; or if there remained behind him any individual against whom he entertained a spirit of enmity. If there were, he begged him to make no scruple in intrusting to him a full statement of his wishes on the subject, adding that he might rest assured of having them accomplished.

"One thing you may be certain of, Nogher," said he to the affectionate fellow, "that I have no sacrets to tell; so don't let that go abroad upon me. I have heard to-day," he added, "that the vessel we are to go in will sail on this day week. My father was here this mornin': but I hadn't hard it then. Will you, Nogher, tell my mother privately that she mustn't come to see me on the day I appointed with my father. From the state of health she's in I'm tould she couldn't bear it. Tell her, then, not to come till the day before I sail; an' that I will expect to see her early on that day. And, Nogher, as you know more about this unhappy business than any one else, except the O'Briens and ourselves, will you give this little packet to my mother? There's three or four locks of my hair in it: one of them is for Una, and desire my mother to see Una, and to get a link of her hair to wear next my heart. My poor father—now that he finds he must part with me—is so distracted and distressed that I coudn't trust him with this message. I want it to be kept a sacret to every one but you, my mother, and Una; but my poor father would be apt to mention it in some fit of grief."

"But is there nothin' else on your mind, Connor?"

"There's no heavy guilt on my mind, Nogher, I thank my God and my dear mother for it."

"Well, I can tell you one thing before you go, Connor

—Bartle Flanagan's well watched. If he has been guilty—if—derry downs, who doubts it!—well—never mind; I'll hould a trifle we get him to show the cloven foot, and condemn himself yet."

"The villain," said Connor, "will be too deep—too polished for you."

"Ten to one he's not. Do you know what we've found out since this business?"

"No."

"Why, divil resave the squig of punch, whiskey, or liquor of any sort or size he'll allow to pass the lips of him. Now, Connor, aren't you up to the cunnin' villany of the thraitor in that maynewyre?"

"I am, Nogher; I see his design in it. He is afeard if he got drunk that he mightn't be able to keep his own sacret."

"Ah, thin, by the holy Nelly, we'll *steep* him yet, or he'll look sharp. Never you mind *him*, Connor."

"Nogher! stop," said Connor, almost angrily, "stop; what do you mane by them last words?"

"Divil a much; it's about the blaggard I'm spakin'; he'll be ped, I can tell you. There's a few friends of yours that intends, some o' these nights, to aise his windpipe a little; the divil a thing more."

"What! to take the unhappy man's life? to murdher him!"

"Hut, Connor; who's spakin' about murdher? No, only to make him miss his breath some night afore long. Does he desarve mercy that 'ud swear away the life of an innocent man?"

"Nogher," replied the other, rising up and speaking with the utmost solemnity, "if one drop of his blood is spilled on my account it will bring the vengeance of Heaven upon the head of every man havin' a hand in it. Will you, because he's a villain, make yourselves murderers?—make yourselves blacker than he is?"

"Why, thin, death alive, Connor, have you your seven

sinsis about you? Faith, that's good, as if it was a sin to knock sich a white-livered Judas upon the head! Sin! —oh devil a morsal o' sin's in that, but the contrary. Sure it's only sarvin' honest people right, to knock such a desaiver on the head. If he had parjured himself for the sake of the thruth, or to assist a brother in throuble, or to help on the good cause, it would be something; but to go to—hut—arra, be my sowl, he'll sup sarra for it, sure enough! I thought it would make your mind aisy, or I wouldn't mintion it till we'd let the breath out of him."

"Nogher," said Connor, "before you leave this unfortunate room, you must take the Almighty to witness that you'll have no hand in this bloody business, an' that you'll put a stop to it altogether. If you don't—and that his life is taken—in the first place, I'll be miserable for life; and in the next, take my word for it, that the judgment of God will fall heavily upon every one consarned in it."

"What for? Is it for slittin' the jugler of sich a rip? Isn't he as bad as a heretic, an' worse, for he turned aginst his own. He has got himself made the head of a lodge, too, and houlds Articles; but it's not bein' an Article-bearer that'll save him, an' he'll find that to his cost. But, indeed, Connor, the villain's a double thraitor, as you'd own, if you *knewn* what I hard a hint of?"

"Well, but you must lave him to God."

"What do you think but I got a whisper that he has bad designs on *her*."

"On who!" said O'Donovan, starting.

"Why, on your own girl, Oona, the Bodagh's daughter. He intends, it's whispered, to take her off; an' it seems, as her father doesn't stand well wid the boys, that Bartle's to get a great body of them to assist him in bringing her away."

Connor paced his cell in deep and vehement agitation. His resentment against this double-dyed villain rose to a fearful pitch; his colour deepened, his eye shot fire,

and, as he clinched his hand convulsively, Nogher saw the fury which this intelligence had excited in him.

"No," he proceeded, "it would be an open sin an' shame to let sich a netarnal limb of the divil escape."

It may, indeed, be said that O'Donovan never properly felt the sense of his restraint until this moment. When he reflected on the danger to which his beloved Una was exposed from the dark plans of this detestable villain, and recollected that there existed in the members of the illegal confederacy such a strong spirit of enmity against Bodagh Buie as would induce them to support Bartle in his designs upon his daughter, he pressed his hand against his forehead, and walked about in a tumult of distress and resentment, such as he had never yet felt in his bosom.

"It's a charity it will be," said Nogher, shrewdly availing himself of the commotion he had created, "to stop the vagabone short in the coorse of his villany. He'll surely bring the darlin' young girl off, and destroy her."

For a few moments he felt as if his heart were disposed to rebel against the ordinances of Providence, as they appeared to be manifested in his own punishment and the successful villany of Bartle Flanagan. The reflection, however, of a strong and naturally pious mind soon enabled him to perceive the errors into which his passions would lead him, if not restrained and subjected. He made an effort to be calm, and in a considerable degree succeeded.

"Nogher," said he, "let us not forget that this Bartle —this—but I will not say it—let us not forget that God can aisily turn his plans against himself. To God, then, let us lave him. Now, hear me; you must swear in His presence that you will have neither act nor part in doin' him an injury; that you will not shed his blood, nor allow it to be shed by others, as far as you can prevent it."

Nogher rubbed his chin gravely, and almost smiled

at what he considered to be a piece of silly nonsense on the part of Connor. He determined, therefore, to satisfy his scruples as well as he could; but, let the consequence be what it might, to evade such an oath.

"Why, Connor," said he, "surely, if you go to that, we can have no ill will against the villain, an' as *you* don't wish it, we'll dhrop the thing; so now make your mind aisy, for another word you or any one else won't ever hear about it."

"And you won't injure the man?"

"Hut! no," replied Nogher with a gravity whose irony was scarcely perceptible, "what would *we* do for him for, now that *you* don't wish it? I never had any particular wish to see my own funeral."

"And, Nogher, you'll do all you can to prevent him from being murdhered?"

"To be sure, Connor—to be sure. By He that made me, we won't give pain *to a single hair of his head*; are you satisfied now?"

"I am," replied the ingenuous young man, who was himself too candid to see through the sophistry of Nogher's oath.

"And now, Nogher," he replied, "many a day have we spent together; you are one of my oldest friends. I suppose this is the last time you will ever see Connor O'Donovan; however, don't, man—don't be cast down; you will hear from me, I hope, and hear that I am well too."

He uttered this with a smile which cost him an effort, for, on looking into the face of his faithful old friend, he saw its muscles working under the influence of strong feeling—or, I should rather say, deep sorrow—which he felt anxious, by a show of cheerfulness, to remove. The fountains, however, of the old servant's heart were opened, and after some ineffectual attempts to repress his griefs, he fell upon Connor's neck and wept aloud.

"Tut, Nogher," said Connor, "surely it's glad you

ought to be, instead of sorry. What would you have done if my first sentence had been acted upon?"

"I'm glad for your sake," replied the other, "but I'm now sorry for my own. You will live, Connor, and you may yet be happy; but he that often held you in his arms—that often played with you, and that, next to your father and your mother, you loved betther than any other livin' thing—he, poor Nogher, will never see his boy more."

On uttering these words, he threw himself again upon Connor's neck, and we are not ashamed to say that their tears flowed together.

"I'll miss you, Connor dear; I'll not see your face at fair or market, nor on the Chapel-green of a Sunday. Your poor father will break his heart, and the mother's eye will never more have an opportunity of being proud out of her son. It's hard upon me to part wid you, Connor, but it can't be helped; I only ax you to remimber Nogher, that, you know, loved you as if you wor his own; remimber me, Connor, of an odd time. I never thought—oh, God, I never thought to see this day. No wondher—oh, no wondher that the fair young crature should be pale and worn, an' sick at heart. I love her now, an' ever will, as well as I did yourself. I'll never see her, Connor, widout thinkin' heavily of him that her heart was set upon, an' that will then be far away from her an' from all that ever loved him."

"Nogher," replied Connor, "I'm not without hope that —but this—this is folly. You know I have a right to be thankful to God and the goodness of government for sparin' my life. Now, farewell; it *is* for ever, Nogher, and it is a tryin' word to say; but you know that every one goin' to America must say it; so think that I'm goin' there, an' it won't signify."

"Ah, Connor, I wish I could," replied Nogher; "but, to tell the thruth, what breaks my heart is, to think of the way you are going from us. Farewell then, Connor

darlin'; an' may the blessin' of God, an' his holy mother, and of all the saints be upon you, an' guard you now and for iver. Amin!"

His tears flowed fast, and he sobbed aloud, while uttering the last words; he then threw his arms about Connor's neck, and, having kissed him, he again wrung his hand, and passed out of the cell, in an agony of grief.

Such is the anomalous nature of that peculiar temperament, which, in Ireland, combines within it the extremes of generosity and crime. Here was a man who had been literally affectionate and harmless during his whole past life, yet who was now actually plotting the murder of a person who had never—except remotely, by his treachery to Connor, whom he loved—rendered him an injury, or given him any cause of offence. And what can show us the degraded state of moral feeling among a people whose natural impulses are as quick to virtue as to vice, and the reckless estimate which the peasantry form of human life, more clearly than the fact, that Connor, the noble-minded, heroic, and pious peasant, could admire the honest attachment of his old friend, without dwelling upon the dark point in his character, and mingle his tears with a man who was deliberately about to join in, or compass, the assassination of a fellow-creature?

Even against persons of his own creed the Irishman thinks that revenge is a duty which he owes to himself; but against those of a different faith it is not only a duty but a virtue, and any man who acts out of this feeling, either as a juror, a witness, or an elector—for the principle is the same—must expect to meet such retribution as was suggested by a heart like Nogher M'Cormick's, which was otherwise affectionate and honest. In the sacred code of perverted honour by which Irishmen are guided, he is undoubtedly the most heroic and manly, and the most worthy also of imitation, who indulges in and executes his vengeance for injuries, whether real

or supposed, with the most determined and unshrinking spirit; but the man who is capable of braving death, by quoting his own innocence as an argument against the justice of the law, even when notoriously guilty, is looked upon by the people, not as an innocent man—for his accomplices and friends know he is not—but as one who is a hero in his rank of life; and it is unfortunately a kind of ambition among too many of our ill-thinking but generous countrymen, to propose such men as the best models for imitation, not only in their lives, but in that hardened hypocrisy which defies and triumphs over the ordeal of death itself.

Connor O'Donovan was a happy representation of all that is noble and pious in the Irish character, without one tinge of the crimes which darken or discolour it: But the heart that is full of generosity and fortitude is generally most susceptible of the kinder and more amiable affections. The noble boy who could hear the sentence of death without the commotion of a nerve, was forced to weep upon the neck of an old and faithful follower, who loved him, when he remembered that, after that melancholy visit, he would see his familiar face no more. When Nogher left him, a train of painful reflections passed through his mind. He thought of Una, of his father, of his mother, and for some time was more depressed than usual. But the gift of life to the young is ever a counterbalance to every evil that is less than death. In a short time he reflected that the same Providence which had interposed between him and his recorded sentence, had his future fate in its hands; and that he had health, and youth, and strength, and, above all, a good conscience, to bear him through the future vicissitudes of his appointed fate.

CHAPTER V.

DURING the few days that intervened between the last interview which Connor held with Nogher M'Cormick, and the day of his final departure, he felt himself rather relieved than depressed by the number of friends who came to visit him for the last time. He was left less to solitude and himself than he otherwise would have been, and, of course, the days of his imprisonment were neither so dreary nor oppressive as the uninterrupted contemplation of his gloomy destiny would have rendered them. Full of the irrepressible ardour of youth, he longed for that change which he knew must bring him onward in the path of life; and in this how little did he resemble the generality of other convicts, who feel as if time were bringing about the day of their departure with painful and more than ordinary celerity. At length the interviews between him and all those whom he wished to see were concluded, with the exception of three, viz, John O'Brien and his own parents, while only two clear days intervened until the period of his departure.

It was on the third morning previous to that unhappy event, that the brother of his Una—the most active and indefatigable of all those who had interested themselves for him—was announced as requesting an interview. Connor, although prepared for this, experienced on the occasion, as every highminded person would do, a strong feeling of degradation and shame as the predominant sensation. That, indeed, was but natural, for it is undoubtedly true that we feel disgrace lie more heavily upon us in the eyes of those whom we esteem, than we

do under any other circumstances. This impression, however, though, as we have said, the strongest, was far from being the only one he felt. A heart like his could not be insensible to the obligations under which the generous and indefatigable exertions of young O'Brien had placed him. But independently of this, he was Una's brother, and the appearance of one so dear to *her*, gave to all his love for her a character of melancholy tenderness, more deep and full than he had probably ever experienced before. Her brother would have been received with extraordinary warmth on his own account, but in addition to that, Connor knew that he now came on behalf of Una herself. It was, therefore, under a tumult of mingled sensations that he received him in his gloomy apartment; gloomy in despite of all that a humane jailer could do to lessen the rigours of his confinement.

"I cannot welcome you to sich a place as this is," said Connor, grasping and wringing his hand, as the other entered, "although I may well say that I would be glad to see you anywhere, as I am, indeed, to see you even here. I know what I owe you, an' what you have done for me."

"Thank God," replied the other, returning his grasp with equal pressure, "thank God, that, at all events, the worst of what we expected will not—" He paused, for on looking at O'Donovan, he observed upon his open brow a singular depth of melancholy, mingled less with an expression of shame than with the calm but indignant sorrow of one who could feel no resentment against him with whom he spoke.

O'Brien saw at a glance that Connor, in consequence of something in his manner, joined to his inconsiderate congratulations, imagined that he believed him guilty. He lost not a moment, therefore, in correcting his mistake.

"It would have been dreadful," he proceeded, "to see innocent blood shed through the perjury of a villain;

for, of course, you cannot suppose for a moment that any one of our family believes you to be guilty."

"I was near doin' you injustice, then," replied the other; "but I ought to know that if you did think me so, you wouldn't now be here, nor act as you did. Not but that I thought it possible, on another account, you—No," he added, after a pause, "that would be doin' the brother of Una injustice."

"You are right," returned O'Brien; "*no* circumstance of *any* kind"—and he laid a peculiar emphasis on the words—"*no* circumstance of *any* kind could bring me to visit a man capable of such a mean and cowardly act; for as to the loss we sustained, I wouldn't think of it. You, Connor O'Donovan, are not the man to commit such an act, either the one way or the other. If I did not *feel* this, you would *not* see me before you." He extended his hand to him while he spoke, and the brow of Connor brightened as he met his grasp.

"I believe you," he replied; "and now I hope we may spake out like men that undherstand one another. In case you hadn't come, I intended to lave a message for you with my mother. I believe you know all Una's sacrets."

"I do," replied O'Brien, "just as well as her confessor."

"Yes, I believe that," said Connor. "The sun in heaven is not purer than she is. The only fault she ever could be charged with, was her love for me; and heavily, oh! far too heavily has she suffered for it."

"I for one never blamed her on that account," said her brother. "I knew that her good sense would have at any time prevented her from forming an attachment to an unworthy object; and upon the strength of her own judgment, I approved of that which she avowed for you. Indeed, I perceived it myself before she told me; but upon attempting to gain her secret, the candid creature at once made me her confidant."

"It is like her," said Connor; "she is all truth. Well would it be for her if she had never seen me. Not even the parting from my father and mother sinks my heart with so much sorrow as the thought that her love for me has made her so unhappy. It's a strange case, John O'Brien, an' a trying one; but since it is the will of God, we must submit to it. How did you leave her? I heard she was getting betther."

"She is better," said John, "past danger, but still very delicate and feeble. Indeed, she is so much worn down that you would scarcely know her. The brightness of her dark eye is gone, so is her complexion. Sorrow, as she says herself, is in her and upon her. Never, indeed, was a young creature's love so pure and true."

O'Donovan made no reply for some time; but the other observed that he turned away his face from him, as if to conceal his emotion. At length his bosom heaved vehemently three or four times, and his breath came and went with a quick and quivering motion, that betrayed the powerful struggle which he felt.

"I know it is but natural for you to feel deeply," continued her brother; "but as you have borne everything heretofore with so much firmness, you must not break down now."

"But you know it is a deadly trial to be for ever separated from sich a girl. Sufferin' so much, you say —so worn! Her dark eye dim with—oh, it is—it is a deadly trial—a heart-breaking trial! John O'Brien," he proceeded, with uncommon earnestness, "you are her only brother, an' she is your only sister. Oh, will you, for the sake of God, and for my sake, if I may take the liberty of sayin' so—but, above all things, will you, for her own sake, when I am gone, comfort and support her, an' raise her heart, if possible, out of this heavy throuble?"

Her brother gazed on him with a melancholy smile, in which might be read both admiration and sympathy.

"Do you think it possible that I would, or could omit to cherish and sustain poor Una under such trying circumstances? Everything considered, however, your words are only natural—only natural."

"Don't let her think too much about it," continued O'Donovan. "Bring her out as much as you can—let her not be much by herself. But this is folly in me," he added; "you know yourself better than I can instruct you how to act."

"God knows," replied the brother, struck, and softened by the mournful anxiety for her welfare which Connor expressed, "God knows, that all you say, and all you can think of besides, shall be done for our dear girl, so make your mind easy."

"I thank you," replied the other; "from my soul an' from the bottom of my heart, I thank you. Endeavour to make her forget me, if you can; an' when this passes away out of her mind, she may yet be happy—a happy wife an' a happy mother—an' she can think of her love for Connor O'Donovan only as a troubled drame that she had in her early life."

"Connor," said the other, "this is not right; you must be firmer;" but as he uttered the words of reproof, the tears almost came to his eyes.

"As for my part," continued Connor, "what is the world to me now that I've lost her? It is—it is a hard an' a dark fate, but why it should fall upon us I do not know. It's as much as I can do to bear it as I ought."

"Well, well," replied John, "don't dwell too much on it. I have something else to speak to you about."

"Dwell on it!" returned the other; "as God is above me, she's not one minute out of my thoughts; an' I tell you, I'd rather be dead this moment than forget her. Her mimory now is the only happiness that is left to me—my only wealth in this world."

"No," said John, "it is not. Connor, I have now a few words to say to you, and I know they will prove

whether you are as generous as you are said to be; and whether your love for my sister is truly tender and disinterested. You have it now in your power to ease her heart very much of a heavy load of concern which she feels on your account. Your father, you know, is now a ruined man, or I should rather say a poor one. You are going out under circumstances the most painful. In the country to which you are unhappily destined you will have no friends—and no one living feels this more acutely than Una; for observe me, I am now speaking on her behalf, and acting in her name. I am her agent. Now Una is richer than you might imagine, being the possessor of a legacy left her by our grandfather by my father's side. Of this legacy she herself stands in no need, but you may and will, when you reach a distant country. Now, Connor, you see how that admirable creature loves you; you see how that love would follow you to the uttermost ends of the earth. Will you, or are you, capable of being as generous as she is? and can you show her that you are as much above the absurd prejudices of the world and its cold forms as he ought to be who is loved by a creature so truly generous and delicate as Una! You know how very poorly she is at present in health; and I tell you candidly, that your declining to accept this as a gift and memorial by which to remember her, may be attended with very serious consequences to her health."

Connor kept his eyes fixed upon the speaker with a look of deep and earnest attention; and as O'Brien detailed with singular address and delicacy these striking proofs of Una's affection, her lover's countenance became an index of the truth with which his heart corresponded to the admirable girl's tenderness and generosity. He seized O'Brien's hand.

"John," said he, "you are worthy of bein' Una's brother, and I could say nothing higher in your favour; but in the mane time, you and she both know that I want nothing to enable me to remember her by. This

is a proof, I grant you, that she loves me truly; but I knew *that* as well before as I do now. In this business I cannot comply with her wish an' yours, an' you musn't press me. *You*, I say, musn't press me. Through my whole life I have never lost my own good opinion, but if I did what you want me now to do, I couldn't respect myself; I would feel lowered in my own mind. In short, I'd feel unhappy, an' that I was too mane to be worthy of your sister. Once for all, then, I cannot comply in this business with your wish an' hers."

"But the anxiety produced by your refusal may have very dangerous effects on her health."

"Then you must contrive somehow to concale my refusal from her till she gets recovered. I couldn't do what you want me, an' if you press me farther upon it, I'll think you don't respect me as much as I'd wish *her* brother to do. Oh, God of heaven!" he exclaimed, clasping his hands, "must I lave you, my darling Una, for ever? I must, I must; an' the dhrame of all we hoped is past—but never, never will she be out of my heart. Her eye dim and her cheek pale! an' all for me—for a man covered with shame and disgrace! Oh, John, John, what a heart! to love me in spite of all this, an' in spite of the world's opinion along with it!"

At this moment one of the turnkeys entered, and told him that his mother and a young lady were coming up to see him.

"My mother!" he exclaimed; "I am glad she is come; but I didn't expect her till the day after to-morrow. A young lady! Heavens above, what young lady could come with my mother?"

He involuntarily exchanged looks with O'Brien, and a thought flashed on the instant across the mind of both. They immediately understood each other.

"Undoubtedly," said John, "it can be no other; it is she—it is Una. Good God! how is this? The interview and separation will be more than she can bear—she will sink under it."

Connor made no reply, but sat down and pressed his right hand upon his forehead, as if to collect energy sufficient to meet the double trial which was now before him.

"I have only one coorse, John," said he, "now; and that is, to appear to be—what I am not—a firm-hearted man. I must try to put on a smiling face before them."

"If it be Una," returned the other, "I shall withdraw for a while. I know her extreme bashfulness in many cases; and I know, too, that anything like a restraint upon her heart at present—in a word, I shall retire for a little."

"It may be as well," said Connor; "but as far as I am concerned, it makes no difference—just as you think proper."

"Your mother will be a sufficient witness," said the delicate-minded brother; "but I will see you again after they shall have left you."

"You must," replied O'Donovan. "Oh see me—see me again! I have something to say to you of more value even than Una's life."

The door then opened, and assisted, or rather supported, by the governor of the jail, and one of the turnkeys, Honor O'Donovan and Una O'Brien entered the cell together.

The situation in which O'Donovan was now placed, will be admitted, we think, by the reader, to have been one equally unprecedented and distressing. It has often been said, and on many occasions with perfect truth, that opposite states of feeling existing in the same breast generally neutralize each other. In Connor's heart, however, there was in this instance nothing of a conflicting nature. The young man's love for such a mother bore in its melancholy beauty a touching resemblance to the purity of his affection for Una O'Brien—each exhibiting in its highest character those virtues which made the heart of the mother proud and loving, and that

of his beautiful girl generous and devoted. So far, therefore, from their appearance together tending to concentrate his moral fortitude, it actually divided his strength and forced him to meet each with a heart subdued and softened by his love for the other.

As they entered, therefore, he approached them, smiling as well as he could; and first taking a hand of each, would have led them over to a deal form beside the fire, but it was soon evident, that, owing to their weakness and agitation united, they required greater support. He and O'Brien accordingly helped them to a seat, on which they set with every symptom of that exhaustion which results at once from illness and mental suffering.

Let us not forget to inform our readers that the day of this sorrowful visit was that on which, according to his original sentence, he should have yielded up his life as a penalty to the law.

"My dear mother," said he, "you an' Una know that this day ought not to be a day of sorrow among us. Only for the goodness of my friends, an' of government, it's not my voice you'd be now listenin' to—but that is now changed—so no more about it. I'm glad to see you both able to come out."

His mother, on first sitting down, clasped her hands together, and in a silent ejaculation, with closed eyes, raised her heart to the Almighty, to supplicate aid and strength to enable her to part finally with that boy who was, and ever had been, dearer to her than her own heart. Una trembled, and on meeting her brother so unexpectedly, blushed deeply, and, indeed, appeared to breathe with difficulty. She held a bottle of smelling salts in her hand.

"John," she said, "I will explain this visit."

"My dear Una," he replied, affectionately, "you need not—it requires no explanation—and I beg you will not think of it one moment more. I must now leave you together for about half an hour, as I have some business

to do in town that will detain me about that time." He then left them.

"Connor," said his mother, "sit down between this darlin' girl an' me, till I spake to you."

He sat down and took a hand of each.

"A darlin' girl she is, mother. It's now I see how very ill you have been, my own Una."

"Yes," she replied, "I was ill—but when I heard that your life was spared I got better."

This she said with an artless but melancholy *naivete*, that was very trying to the fortitude of her lover. As she spoke she looked fondly but mournfully into his face.

"Connor," proceeded his mother, "I hope you are fully sensible of the mercy that God has shown you, under this great thrial?"

"I hope I am, indeed, my dear mother. It is to God I surely owe it."

"It is, an' I trust that, go where you will and live where you may, the day will never come when you'll forget the debt you owe the Almighty for preventin' you from bein' cut down into the grave in the very bloom of youth life. I hope, avillish machree, that that day will never come."

"God forbid it ever should, mother dear."

"Thin you may larn from what has happened, *avick agus asthore*,* never, oh never to despair of God's mercy; no matther into what thrial or difficulty you may be brought. You see, whin you nayther hoped for it here, nor expected it, how it came for all that."

"It did, blessed be God!"

"You're goin' now, ahagur, to a sthrange land, where you'll meet—ay, where my darlin' boy will meet the worst of company; but remember, *alanna villish*, that your mother, well as she loves you, an' well, I own, as

* My son and my darling.

you desarve to be loved—that mother that hung over the cradle of her only one—that dressed him, an' reared him, an' felt many a proud heart out of him—that mother would sooner at any time see him in his grave, his soul bein' free from stain, than to know that his heart was corrupted by the world, an' the people you'll meet in it."

Something in the last sentence must have touched a chord in Una's heart, for the tears, without her showing any other external signs of emotion, streamed down her cheeks.

"My advice thin to you—an' oh, *avick machree, machree*, it is my last, the last you will ever hear from my lips—"

"Oh, mother, mother," exclaimed Connor, but he could not proceed; voice was denied him. Una here sobbed aloud.

"You bore your thrial well, my darlin' son; you must thin bear this as well; an' you, a colleen dhas, remember your promise to me afore I consinted to come with you this day."

The weeping girl here dried her eyes, and by a strong effort hushed her grief.

"My advice, thin, to you, is never to neglect your duty to God, for if you do it wanst or twiste, you'll begin by degrees to get careless—then, bit by bit, asthore, your heart will hearden, your conscience will lave you, an' wickedness, an' sin, an' guilt will come upon you. It's no matther, asthore, how much wicked comrades may laugh an' jeer at you, keep you thrue to the will of your good God, an' to your religious duties, an' let *them* take their own coorse. Will your promise me to do this, *asuillish machree?*"*

"Mother, I have always sthrove to do it, and with God's assistance, always will."

"An' my son, too, will bear up undher this like a man.

* Light of my heart.

Remember, Connor darlin', that although you're lavin' us for ever, yet your poor father an' I have the blessed satisfaction of knowin' that we're not childless; that you're alive, an' that you may yet do well an' be happy. I mention these things, acushla machree, to show you that there's nothin' over you so bad but you may show yourself firm an' manly undher it; act as you have done. It's you, asthore, ought to comfort your father an' me; an' I hope, whin your're partin' from him, that you'll—nh God, support him! I wish, Connor darlin', that that partin' was over, but I depend upon you to make it as light upon him as you can."

She paused, apparently from exhaustion. Indeed, it was evident, either that she had little else to add, or that she felt too weak to speak much more, with such a load of sorrow and affliction on her heart.

"There is one thing, Connor jewel, that I need'ht mintion. Of coorse you'll write to us as often as you convaniently can. Oh, do not forget that, for you know that that bit of paper from your own hand is all belongin' to you we will ever see more. *Avick machree, machree*, many a long look out we will have for it. It may keep the ould man's heart from breakin'."

She was silent, but as she uttered the last words there was a shaking of the voice that gave clear proof of the difficulty with which she went through the solemn task of being calm; a difficulty which, for the sake of her son, she had heroically imposed upon herself.

She was now silent, but, as is usual with Irishwomen when under the influence of sorrow, she rocked herself involuntarily to and fro, while, with closed eyes, hands clasped as before, she held communion with God, the only true source of comfort.

"Connor," she added, after a pause, during which he and Una, though silent from respect to her, were both deeply affected; "sit fornint me, avick machree, that, for the short time you're to be with me, I may have you before my eyes. Husth now, a colleen machree, an'

remimber your promise. Where's the stringth you said you'd show ?"

She gazed with a long look of love and sorrow upon the fine countenance of her manly son, and nature would be no longer restrained.

"Let me lay my head upon your breast," said she; "I'm attemptin' too much; the mother's heart will give out the mother's voice—will speak the mother's sorrow! Oh, my son, my son, my darlin' manly son, are you lavin' your lovin' mother for evermore, for evermore ?"

She was overcome; placing her head upon his bosom, her grief fell into that beautiful but mournful wail, with which, in Ireland, those of her sex express the profoundest sense of affliction.

Indeed, the scene assumed a tenderness, from this incident, which was inexpressibly affecting; inasmuch as her cry, so like that of death, was but little out of place when bewailing that beloved son whom, by the stern decree of law, she was never to see again.

Connor kissed her pale cheek and lips, and rained down a flood of bitter tears upon her face; and Una, borne away by the enthusiasm of her sorrow, threw her arms also around her, and wept aloud.

At length having in some degree eased her heart, she sat up, and with that consideration and good sense for which she had ever been remarkable, said,

"Nature must have its way; an' surely, within rason it's not sinful, seein' that God himself has given us the feelin's of sorrow, whin thim that we love is lavin' us—lavin' us, never, never to see them agin. It's only nature, afther all; and now, ma colleen dhas—"

Her allusion to the final separation of those we love —or, in her own words, "to the feelin's of sorrow, whin thim we love is lavin' us"—was too much for the heart and affections of the gentle girl at her side, whose grief now passed all the bounds which her previous attempts at being firm had prescribed to it.

O'Donovan took the beloved one in his arms, and, in

the long embrace which ensued, seldom were love and sorrow so singularly and mournfully blended.

"I don't want to prevent you from cryin', a colleen machree; for I know it will lighten an' aise your heart," said Honor; "but remimber your wakeness, and your poor health; an', Connor, avourneen, don't you—if you love her—don't forget the state her health's in either."

"Mother, mother, you know it's the last time I'll ever look upon my Una's face again," he exclaimed. "Oh well may I be loath an' unwillin' to part with her. You'll think of me, my darlin' life, when I'm gone—not as a guilty man, Una dear, but as one that if he ever committed a crime, it was lovin' you, an' bringin' you to this unhappy state."

"God sees my heart this day," she replied—and she spoke with difficulty—"that I could and would have travelled over the world; borne joy and sorrow, hardship and distress—good fortune and bad—all happily, if you had been by my side—if you had not been taken from me. Oh, Connor, Connor, you may well pity your Una—for yours I am and was—another's I will never be. You are entering into scenes that will relieve you by their novelty; that will force you to think of other things and of other persons than those you've left behind you; but I—oh, what can I look upon that will not fill my heart with despair and sorrow, by reminding me of you and of your affection?"

"*Fareer gair*," exclaimed the mother, speaking involuntarily aloud, and interrupting her own words with sobs of bitter anguish—'*Fareer gair, ma colleen dhas*, but that's the heavy thruth with us all. Oh, the ould man's heart will break all out, when he looks upon the place, an' everything else that our boy left behind him."

"Dear Una," said Connor, "you know that we're partin' now for ever."

"My breaking heart tells me that," she replied. "I would give the wealth of the world that it was not so—I would—I would."

"Listen to me, my own life. You must not let your love for me lie so heavy upon your heart. Go out, and keep your mind employed upon other thoughts; by degrees you'll forget—no, I don't think you could altogether forget me—me—the first, Una, you ever loved."

"And the last, Connor, the last I ever will love."

"No, no. In the presence of my lovin' mother, I say that you must not think that way. Time will pass, my own Una, an' you will yet be happy with some other. You're very young; an' as I said, time will wear me by degrees out of your mimory."

Una broke hastily from his embrace, for she lay upon his breast all this time.

"Do you think so, Connor O'Donovan," she exclaimed, standing apart from him; but on looking into his face, and reading the history of deep-seated sorrow which appeared there so legible, she again "fled to him and wept."

"Oh, no," she continued, "I cannot quarrel with you now; but you do the heart of your *own* Una injustice, if you think it could ever feel happiness with another. Already I have my mother's consent to enter a convent; and to enter a convent is my fixed determination."

"Oh, mother," said Connor, "how will I lave this blessed girl? how will I part with her?"

Honor rose up, and, by two or three simple words, disclosed more forcibly, more touchingly, than any direct exhibition of grief could have done, the inexpressible power of the misery she felt at this eternal separation from her only boy. She seized Una's two hands, and kissing her lips, said, in tones of the most heart-rending pathos,

"Oh, Una, Una, pity me; I am his *mother!*"

Una threw herself into her arms, and sobbed out,

"Yes, and mine."

"Thin you'll obay me as a daughter should," said

Honor. "This is too much for you, Oona; part we both must from him, an' neither of us is able to bear much more."

She here gave Connor a private signal to be firm, pointing unobservedly to Una's pale cheek, which at the moment lay upon her bosom.

"Connor," she proceeded, "Oona has the lock you sent her. Nogher gave it to me; an' my daughter, for I will always call her so, has it at this minute next her lovin' heart. Here is hers, an' let it lie next yours."

Connor seized the glossy ringlet from his mother's hands, and placed it at that moment next the seat of his undying affection for the devoted creature from whose ebon locks it had been taken.

His mother then kissed Una again, and, rising up, said,

"Now, my daughter, remimber I am your mother, an' obay me."

"I will," said Una, attempting to repress her grief, "I will; but—"

"Yis, darlin', you will. Now, Connor, my son, my son—Connor!"

"What is it, mother darlin'?"

"We're goin', Connor; we're lavin' you; be firm—be a man. Aren't you my son, Connor? my only son; an' the ould man—an' never, never more—oh! kneel down, kneel down till I bless you. Oh, many, many a blessin' has risen from your mother's lips an' your mother's heart to heaven for you, my son, my son!"

Connor knelt, his heart bursting; but he knelt not alone. By his side was his own Una, with meek and bended head, awaiting *her mother's* blessing.

She then poured forth that blessing: first upon him who was nearest to her heart, and afterward upon the worn but still beautiful girl, whose love for that adored son had made her so inexpressibly dear to her. While uttering this fervent but sorrowful benediction, she placed a hand upon the head of each, after which

she stooped and kissed them both, but without shedding a single tear.

"Now," said she, "comes the mother's wakeness; but my son will help me by his manliness; so will my daughter. I am very weak. Oh, what heart can know the sufferin's of this hour, but mine? My son, my son; Connor O'Donovan, my son!"

At this moment John O'Brien entered the room; but the solemnity and pathos of her manner and voice hushed him so completely into silent attention, that it is probable she did not perceive him.

"Let me put my arms about him an' kiss his lips once more, an' then I'll say farewell."

She again approached Connor, who opened his arms to receive her, and after having kissed him and looked into his face, said, "I will now go, I will now go;" but instead of withdrawing as she had intended, it was observed that she pressed him more closely to her heart than before; plied her hands about his neck and bosom, as if she were not actually conscious of what she did; and at length sunk into the forgetfulness of all her piercing misery upon his breast.

"Now," said Una, rising into a spirit of unexpected fortitude, "now, Connor, I will be her daughter, and you must be her son. The moment she recovers we must separate, and in such a manner as to show that our affection for each other shall not be injurious to her."

"It is nature only," said her brother; "or, in other words, the love that is natural to such a mother for such a son, that has overcome her. Connor, this must be ended."

"I am willin' it should," replied the other. "You must assist them home, and let me see you again to-morrow. I have something of the deepest importance to say to you."

Una's bottle of smelling salts soon relieved the wo-worn mother; and, ere the lapse of many minutes, she

was able to summon her own natural firmness of character. The lovers, too, strove to be firm; and, after one long and last embrace, they separated from Connor with more composure than, from the preceding scene, might have been expected.

The next day, according to promise, John O'Brien paid him an early visit, in order to hear what Connor had assured him was of more importance even than Una's life itself. Their conference was long and serious, for each felt equally interested in its subject matter. When it was concluded, and they had separated, O'Brien's friends observed that he appeared like a man whose mind was occupied by something that occasioned him to feel deep anxiety. What the cause of this secret care was, he did not disclose to any one except his father, to whom, in a few days afterward, he mentioned it. His college vacation had now nearly expired; but it was naturally agreed upon, in the course of the communication he then made, that for the present he should remain with them at home, and postpone his return to Maynooth, if not abandon the notion of the priesthood altogether. When the Bodagh left his son after this dialogue, his open, good-humoured countenance seemed clouded, his brow thoughtful, and his whole manner that of a man who has heard something more than usually unpleasant; but whatever this intelligence was, he too appeared equally studious to conceal it.

The day now arrived on which Connor O'Donovan was to see his other parent for the last time, and this interview he dreaded, on the old man's account, more than he had done even the separation from his mother. Our readers may judge, therefore, of his surprise on finding that his father exhibited a want of sorrow or of common feeling, that absolutely amounted almost to indifference.

Connor felt it difficult to account for a change so singular and extraordinary, in one with whose affection

for himself he was so well acquainted. A little time, however, and an odd hint or two thrown out in the early part of their conversation, soon enabled him to perceive, either that he laboured under some strange hallucination, or had discovered a secret source of comfort known only to himself. At length it appeared to the son that he had discovered the cause of this unaccountable change in the conduct of his father; and, we need scarcely assure our readers, that his heart sank into new and deeper distress at the words from which he drew the inference.

"Connor," said the miser, "I had great luck yestherday. You remimber Antony Cusack, that ran away from me wid seventy-three pounds fifteen shillins an' nine pence, now betther than nine years ago. Many a curse he had from me for his roguery; but, somehow, it seems he only *thruv* undher them. His son Andy called on me yestherday mornin', and *ped* me to the last farden, inth'rest an' all. Wasn't I in luck?"

"It was very fortunate, father, an' I'm glad of it."

"It was, indeed, the hoighth o' luck. Now, Connor, you think one thing, an' that is, that we're partin' for ever, and that we'll never see one another till we meet in the next world. Isn't that what you think? Eh, Connor?"

"It's hard to tell what may happen, father. We may see one another even in this; stranger things have been brought about."

"I tell you, Connor, we'll meet agin; I have made a plan out of my own head for that; but the luckiest of all was the money yestherday."

"What is the plan, father?"

"Don't ax me, avick, bekase it's betther for you not to know it. I may be disappointed, but it's not likely aither; still it 'ud be risin' expectations in you, an' if it didn't come to pass, you'd only be more unhappy; an' you know, Connor darlin', I wouldn't wish to be the

manes of making your poor heart sore for one minute. God knows the same young heart has suffered enough, an' more than it ought to suffer. Connor?"

"Well, father?"

"Keep up your spirits, darlin'; don't be at all cast down, I tell you."

The old man caught his son's hands ere he spoke, and uttered these words with a voice of such tenderness and affection, that Connor, on seeing him assume the office of comforter, contrary to all he had expected, felt himself more deeply affected than if his father had fallen, as was his wont, into all the impotent violence of grief.

"It was only comin' here to-day, Connor, that I thought of this plan; but I wish to goodness your poor mother knew it, for thin maybe she'd let me mintion it to you."

"If it would make me any way unhappy," replied Connor, fearing it might be some sordid project, "I'd rather not hear it; only whatever it is, father, if it's against my dear mother's wishes, don't put it in practice."

"I couldn't, Connor, widout her consint, barrin' we'd—but there's no use in that; only keep up your spirits, Connor dear. Still I'm glad it came into my head, this plan; for if I thought that I'd never see you agin, I wouldn't know how to part wid you; my heart 'ud fairly break, or my head 'ud get light. Now, won't you promise me not to fret, acushla machree? an' to keep your heart up, an' your spirits?"

"I'll fret as little as I can, father. You know there's not much pleasure in frettin', an' that no one would fret if they could avoid it; but will you promise me, my dear father, to be guided an' advised in whatever you do, or intend to do, by my mother—by my blessed mother?"

"I will—I will, Connor; an' if I had always done so, maybe it isn't here now you'd be a standin, an' my

heart breakin' to look at you; but, indeed, it was God, I hope, put this plan into my head; an' the money yestherday, that, too, was so lucky—far more so, Connor dear, than you think. Only for that—but sure no matther, Connor, we're not partin' for evermore now; so, acushla machree, let your mind be aisy. Cheer up, cheer up, my darlin' son."

Much more conversation of this kind took place between them during the old man's stay, which he prolonged almost to the last hour. Connor wondered, as was but natural, what the plan so recently fallen upon by his father could be. Indeed, sometimes he feared that the idea of their separation had shaken his intellect, and that his allusions to this mysterious discovery, mixed up, as they were, with the uncommon delight he expressed at having recovered Cusack's money, boded nothing less than the ultimate derangement of his faculties. One thing, however, seemed obvious, that, whatever it might be, whether reasonable or otherwise, his father's mind was exclusively occupied by it; and that, during the whole scene of their parting, it sustained him in a manner for which he felt it utterly impossible to account. It is true he did not leave him without shedding tears, and bitter tears; but they were unaccompanied by the wild vehemence of grief which had, on former occasions, raged through and almost desolated his heart. The reader may entertain some notion of what he would have felt on this occasion, were it not for the "plan," as he called it, which supported him so much, when we tell him that he blessed his son three or four times during their interview, without being conscious that he had blessed him more than once. His last words to him were to keep up his spirits, for that there was little doubt but they would meet again.

The next morning, at daybreak, "their noble boy," as they fondly and proudly called him, was conveyed to the transport, in company with many others; and,

at the hour of five o'clock P. M. that melancholy vessel weighed anchor, and spread her broad sails to the bosom of the ocean.

Although the necessary affairs of life are, after all, the great assuagers of sorrow, yet there are also cases where the heart persists in rejecting the consolation brought by time, and in clinging to the memory of that which it loved. Neither Honor O'Donovan nor Una O'Brien could forget our unhappy hero, nor school their affections into the apathy of ordinary feelings. Of Fardorougha we might say the same; for, although he probably felt the want of his son's presence more keenly even than his wife, yet his grief, notwithstanding its severity, was mingled with the interruption of a habit, such as is frequently the prevailing cause of sorrow in selfish and contracted minds. That there was much selfishness in his grief, our readers, we dare say, will admit. At all events, a scene which took place between him and his wife, on the night of the day which saw Connor depart from his native land for ever, will satisfy them of the different spirit which marked their feelings on that unfortunate occasion.

Honor had, as might be expected, recovered her serious composure, and spent a great portion of that day in offering up her prayers for the welfare of their son. Indeed, much of her secret grief was checked by the alarm which she felt for her husband, whose conduct on that morning before he left home was marked by the wild excitement which of late had been so peculiar to him. Her surprise was consequently great when she observed, on his return, that he manifested a degree of calmness, if not serenity, utterly at variance with the outrage of his grief, or we should rather say, the delirium of his despair, in the early part of the day. She resolved, however, with her usual discretion, not to catechise him on the subject, lest his violence might revive, but to let his conduct explain itself, which she knew in a little time it would do. Nor was she

mistaken. Scarcely had an hour elapsed, when, with something like exultation, he disclosed his plan, and asked her advice and opinion. She heard it attentively, and for the first time since the commencement of their affliction, did the mother's brow seem unburdened of the sorrow which sat upon it, and her eye to gleam with something like the light of expected happiness. It was, however, on their retiring to rest that night, that the affecting contest took place, which exhibited so strongly the contrast between their characters. We mentioned in a preceding part of this narrative, that ever since her son's incarceration, Honor had slept in his bed, and with her head on the very pillow which his had so often pressed. As she was about to retire, Fardorougha for a moment appeared to forget his "plan," and everything but the departure of his son. He followed Honor to his bedroom, which he traversed, distractedly clasping his hands, kissing his boy's clothes, and uttering sentiments of extreme misery and despair.

"There's his bed," he exclaimed; "there's our boy's bed, but where is he himself? gone, gone for ever! There's his clothes, our darlin' son's clothes; look at them. Oh God, oh God! my heart will break outright. Oh, Connor, our boy, our boy, are you gone from us for ever! We must sit down to our breakfast in the mornin', to our dinner, and to our supper at night, but our noble boy's face we'll never see, his voice we'll never hear."

"Ah, Fardorougha, it's thrue, it's thrue," replied the wife; "but remimber he's not in the grave, not in the clay of the churchyard; we haven't seen him carried there, an' laid down undher the heart-breakin' sound of the dead-bell; we haven't hard the cowld noise of the clay fallin' in upon his coffin. Oh no, no, thanks, everlastin' thanks to the God that has spared our boy's life! How often have you an' I hard people say over the corpses of their children, 'Oh, if he was only alive,

I didn't care in what part of the world it was, or if I was never to see his face again, only that he was livin'.' An' wouldn't they, Fardorougha dear, give the world's wealth to have their wishes? Oh they would, they would, an' thanks for ever be to the Almighty! our boy is livin' and may yet be happy. Fardorougha, let us not fly in the face of God, who has in his mercy spared our son."

"I'll sleep in his bed," replied the husband; "on the very spot he lay on I'll lie."

This was indeed trenching, and selfishly trenching upon the last sad privilege of the mother's heart. Her sleeping here was one of those secret but melancholy enjoyments, which the love of a mother or of a wife will often steal, like a miser's theft, from the very hoard of their own sorrows. In fact, she was not prepared for this, and when he spoke she looked at him for some time in silent amazement.

"Oh no, Fardorougha dear, the mother, the mother, that her breast was so often his pillow, has the best right, now that he's gone, to lay her head where his lay. Oh, for Heaven's sake, lave that poor pleasure to me, Fardorougha."

"No, Honor, *you* can bear up undher grief better than *I* can. I *must* sleep where my boy slep."

"Fardorougha, I could go upon my knees to you, an' I will, avourneen, if you'll grant me this."

"I can't, I can't," he replied, distractedly; "I could sleep nowhere else. I love everything belongin' to him. I can't, Honor ,I can't, I can't."

"Fardorougha, my heart—his mother's heart—is fixed upon it, an' was. Oh lave this to me, acushla, lave this to me; it's all I ax."

"I couldn't, I couldn't; my heart is breakin'; it'll be sweet to me; I'll think I'll be nearer him;" and as he uttered these words the tears flowed copiously down his cheeks.

His affectionate wife was touched with compassion,

and immediately resolved to let him have his way, whatever it might cost herself.

"God pity you," she said; "I'll give it up, I'll give it up, Fardorougha. Do, sleep where he slep; I can't blame you, nor I don't; for sure it's only a proof of how much you love him." She then bade him good night, and, with spirits dreadfully weighed down by this singular incident, withdrew to her lonely pillow; for Connor's bed had been a single one, in which, of course, two persons could not sleep together. Thus did these bereaved parents retire to seek that rest which nothing but exhausted nature seemed disposed to give them, until at length they fell asleep under the double shadow of night and a calamity which filled their hearts with so much distress and misery.

In the mean time, whatever these two families might have felt for the sufferings of their respective children in consequence of Bartle Flanagan's villany, that plausible traitor had watched the departure of his victim with a palpitating anxiety almost equal to what some unhappy culprit, in the dock of a prison, would experience when the foreman of his jury hands down the sentence which is either to hang or acquit him. Up to the very moment in which the vessel sailed, his cruel but cowardly heart was literally sick with the apprehension that Connor's mitigated sentence might be still farther commuted to a term of imprisonment. Great, therefore, was his joy, and boundless his exultation, on satisfying himself that he was now perfectly safe in the crime he had committed, and that his path was never to be crossed by him, whom, of all men living, he had most feared and hated. The reader is not to suppose, however, that by the ruin of Connor, and the revenge he consequently had gained upon Fardorougha, the scope of his dark designs was by any means accomplished. Far from it; the fact is, his measures were only in a progressive state. In Nogher M'Cormick's last interview with Connor, our readers will

please to remember that a hint had been thrown out by that attached old follower, of Flanagan's entertaining certain guilty purposes involving nothing less than the abduction of Una. Now, in justice to Flanagan's sagacity we are bound to say, that no one living had ever received from himself any intimation of such an intention. The whole story was fabricated by Nogher for the purpose of getting Connor's consent to the vengeance which it had been determined to execute upon his enemy. By a curious coincidence, however, the story, though decidedly false so far as Nogher knew to the contrary, happened to be literally and absolutely true. Flanagan, indeed, was too skilful and secret, either to precipitate his own designs until the feelings of the parties should abate and settle down, or to place himself at the mercy of another person's discretion. He knew his own heart too well to risk his life by such dangerous and unseasonable confidence. Some months consequently had passed away since Connor's departure, when an event took place which gave him still farther security. This was nothing less than the fulfilment by Fardorougha of that plan to which he looked forward with such prospective satisfaction. Connor had not been a month gone when his father began to dispose of his property, which he soon did, having sold out his farm to good advantage. He then paid his rent, the only debt he owed; and having taken a passage to New South Wales for himself and Honor, they departed with melancholy satisfaction to seek that son without whose society they found their desolate hearth gloomier than the cell of a prison.

This was followed, too, by another circumstance, but one apparently of little importance, which was, the removal of Biddy Nulty to the Bodagh's family, through the interference of Una, by whom she was treated with singular affection, and admitted to her confidence.

Such was the disposition of the parties after a lapse

of five months subsequent to the transportation of Connor. Flanagan had conducted himself with great circumspection, and, so far as public observation could go, with much propriety. There was no change whatsoever perceptible, either in his dress or manner, except that alluded to by Nogher, of his altogether declining to taste any intoxicating liquid. In truth, so well did he act his part, that the obloquy raised against him at the period of Connor's trial was nearly, if not altogether, removed, and many persons once more adopted an impression of his victim's guilt.

With respect to the Bodagh and his son, the anxiety which we have described them as feeling in consequence of the latter's interview with O'Donovan, was now completely removed. Una's mother had nearly forgotten both the crime and its consequences; but upon the spirits of her daughter there appeared to rest a silent and a settled sorrow, not likely to be diminished or removed. Her cheerfulness had abandoned her, and many an hour did she contrive to spend with Biddy Nulty, engaged in the mournful satisfaction of talking over all that affection prompted of her banished lover.

CHAPTER VI.

We must now beg our readers to accompany us to a scene of a different description from any we have yet drawn. The night of a November day had set in, or rather advanced so far as nine o'clock, when, toward the angle of a small three-cornered field, called, by a peculiar coincidence of name, Oona's Handkerchief, in consequence of an old legend connected with it, might be seen moving a number of straggling figures, sometimes in groups of four and five; sometimes of two or three, as the case might be, and not unfrequently did a single straggler advance, and, after a few private words, either join the others or proceed alone to a house situated in the angular corner of the field to which we allude. As the district was a remote one, and the night rather dark, several shots might be heard as they proceeded, and several flashes in the pan seen from the rusty arms of those who were probably anxious to pull a trigger for the first time. The country, at the period we write of, be it observed, was in a state of comparative tranquillity, and no such thing as a police corps had been heard of or known in the neighbourhood.

At the lower end of a long, level stretch of moor, called the Black Park, two figures approached a kind of gate or pass that opened into it. One of them stood until the other advanced, and in a significant tone asked, Who comes there?

"A friend to the guard," was the reply.

"*Good morrow*," said the other.

"*Good morrow mornin' to you.*"

"*What age are you in?*"

"*In the end of the Fifth.*"*

"All right; come on, boy; the thrue blood's in you, whoever you are."

"An' is it possible you don't know me, Dandy?"

"Faix is it; I forgot my spectacles to-night. Who the dickens are you at all?"

"I suppose you purtind to forget Ned M'Cormick?"

"Is it Nogher's son?"

"The divil a other; an', Dandy Duffy, how are you, man alive?"

"Why you see, Ned, I've been so long out of the counthry, an' I'm now so short a time back, that upon my sowl I forget a great many of my ould acquaintances, especially them that wor only slips when I *wint acrass.*† Faith, I'm purty well, considherin', Ned, I thank you."

"Bad luck to thim that sint you acrass, Dandy! not but that you got off purty well on the whole, by all accounts. They say only that Rousin Redhead swore like a man you'd 'a' got a touch of the *Shuggy Shoe.*"‡

"To the divil wid it all now, Ned; let us have no more about it; I don't for my own part like to think of it. Have you any notion of what we're called upon for to-night?"

"Divil the laste; but I believe, Dandy, that Bartle's not the white-headed boy wid *you* no more nor wid some more of us."

"Him! a double-distilled villain. Faith, they wor never good that had the white liver; an' he has it to the back bone. My brother Lachlin, that's now dead, God rest him, often tould me about the way he thricked him and Barney Bradly when they wor green horns, about

* These were passwords of Ribandism, and are taken from the chronological arrangement of the seven ages of the Christian Church, as adopted by the writers of Pastorini.

† In other words, when he was transported.

‡ Gallows.

sixteen or seventeen. He got them to join him in stalin' a sheep for their Christmas dinner, he said; so they all three stole it; an' the blaggard skinned and cut it up, sendin' my poor *bocaun** of a brother home to hide the skin in the sthraw in our barn, and poor Barney, wid only the head an' trotthers, to hide them in his father's cow-house. Very good; in a day or two the neighbours wor all called upon to clear themselves upon the holy Evangelisk; and the first two that he egg'd an to do it was my brother an' Barney. Of coorse he 'switched the primmer'† himself that he was innocent; but whin it was all over *some one* sint Jarmy Campel, that lost the sheep, to the very spot where they hid the fleece an' trotthers. Jarmey didn't wish to say much about it; so he tould them if they'd fairly acknowledge it, an' pay him betune them for the sheep, he'd dhrop it. My father an' Andy Bradly did so, an' there it ended; but purshue the morsal of the mutton ever they tasted in the mane time. As for Bartle, he managed the thing so well that at the time they never suspected him, although divil a other could betray them, for he was the only one knew it; an' he had the aiten o' the mutton, too, the blaggard. Faith, Ned, I know him well. Now think o' that thrick, an' him only a boy at the time!"

"He has conthrived to get a sthrong back o' the boys any how."

"He has, an' 'tis that, an' bekase he's a good hand to be undher for my revinge on Blennerhasset, that made me join him."

"I dunna what could make him refuse to let Alick Nulty join him?"

"Is it my cousin from Annaloghan? an' did he?"

"Divil a lie in it; it's as thrue as you're standin' there; but do you know what's suspected?"

"No."

* A soft, silly fellow.

† To switch the primmer, *i. e.*, to swear; and it is generally understood, falsely.

"Why, that he has an eye on Bodagh Buie's daughter. Alick towld me that for a long time afther Connor O'Donovan was transported, the father and son wor afeard of him, in consequence of something they hard from Connor himself. Alick hard it from his sister Biddy, an' it appears that the Bodagh's daughter tould her family that he used to stare her out of countenance at mass, an' several times struv to put the *furraun** on her in hopes to get acquainted."

"He would do it; an' my hand to you, if he undhertakes it, he'll not fail; I'll tell you another thing, if he suspected that I knew anything about the thraicherous thrick he put on my poor brother, the divil a toe he'd let me join him; but you see I was only a mere gorsoon at the time."

"At all evints, let us keep an eye on him; an' in regard to Connor O'Donovan's business, let him not be too sure that *that's* over wid him yet. At any rate, by dad, my father has slipped out a name upon him an' us that will do him no good. The other boys now call us the *Stags of Lisdhu*, that bein' the place where his father lived, an' the nickname you see rises out of his thrachery to poor Connor O'Donovan."

"Did he ever give any hint himself about carryin' away the Bodagh's purty daughter?"

"Is it him? Oh, ho! catch him at it; he's a dam' sight too close to do any sich thing."

After some farther conversation upon that and other topics, they arrived at the place of appointment, which was a hedge school-house: one of those where the master, generally an unmarried man, merely wields his sceptre during school hours, leaving it open and uninhabited for the rest of the twenty-four.

The appearance of those who were here assembled was indeed singularly striking. A large fire of the unconsumed peat brought by the scholars on that morning

* An over civil and plausible manner of addressing a person.

was kindled in the middle of the floor—its usual site. Around upon stones, hobs, bosses, and seats of various descriptions, sat the "boys," some smoking and others drinking; for upon nights of this kind a shebeen-house keeper, uniformly a member of such societies, generally attends for the sale of his liquor, if he cannot succeed in prevailing on them to hold their meetings in his own house, a circumstance which, for many reasons, may not be in every case advisable. As they had not all yet assembled, nor the business of the night commenced, they were, of course, divided into several groups, and engaged in various amusements. In the lower end of the house was a knot, busy at the game of "spoil five," their ludicrous table being the crown of a hat, placed upon the floor in the centre. These all sat upon the ground, their legs stretched out, their torch-bearer holding a lighted bunch of fir splinters, stuck for convenience' sake in the muzzle of a horse pistol. In the upper end, again, sat another clique, listening to a man who was reading a treasonable ballad. Such of them as could themselves read stretched over their necks, in eagerness to peruse it along with him, and such as could not —indeed, the greater number—gave force to its principles by very significant tones and gestures; some being those of melody, and others those of murder; that is to say, part of them were attempting to hum a tune in a low voice suitable to the words, while others, more ferocious, brandished their weapons, as if those against whom the spirit of the ballad was directed had been then within the reach of their savage passions. Beside the fire, and near the middle of the house, sat a man, who, by his black stock and military appearance, together with a scar over his brow that gave him a most repulsive look, was evidently a pensioner, or old soldier. This person was engaged in examining some rusty firearms that had been submitted to his inspection. His self-importance was amusing, as was also the deferential aspect of those who, with arms in their

hands, hammering flints or turning screws, awaited patiently their turn for his opinion of their efficiency. But perhaps the most striking group of all was that in which a thick-necked, bull-headed young fellow, with blood-coloured hair, a son of Rousin Redhead, who, by-the-way, was himself present, and another beetle-browed slip were engaged in drawing for a wager upon one of the schoolboys' slates, the figure of a coffin and cross-bones. A hardened looking old sinner, with murder legible in his face, held a few halfpence which they wagered in his open hand, while in the other he clutched a pole, surmounted by a bent bayonet that had evidently seen some service. The last group worthy remark was composed of a few persons who were writing threatening notices upon a leaf torn out of a schoolboy's copy, which was laid upon what they formerly termed "a copy board," or piece of plain deal, kept upon the knees, as a substitute for desks, while the boys were writing. These amusements were resorted to while waiting for the Article Bearer, or the Captain, for such was Bartle Flanagan, who now entered the house, and saluted all present with great cordiality.

"Begad, boys," he said, "our four guards widout is worth any money. I had to pass the signword afore I could pass myself, and that's the way it ought to be. But, boys, before we go any farther, an' for fraid of thraitors, I must call the rowl. You'll stand in a row roun' the walls, an' thin we can make sure that there's no spies among us."

He then called out the roll of those who were members of his lodge, and having ascertained that all was right, he proceeded immediately to business.

"Rousin' Redhead, what's the raison you didn't take the arms from Captain St. Ledger's stewart? Sixteen men armed was enough to do it, an' yees failed."

"Ay, an' if you had been wid us, and sixteen more to the back o' that, you'd fail too. Begarra, captain dear, it seems that good people is scarce. Look at

Micky Mulvather there, you see his head tied up: but aldo he can play cards well enough, be me sowl he's short of one ear, any how; an' if you could meet wan o' the same stewart's bullets goin' abroad at night like ourselves for its divarsion, it might let you know how he lost it. Bartle, I tell you, a number of us isn't satisfied wid you. You send us out to meet danger, an' you won't come yourself."

"Don't you know, Rouser, that I always *do* go whenever I can, but I'm caged now;* faix, I don't sleep in a barn, and can't budge as I used to do."

"An' who's tyin' you to your place, thin?"

"Rouser," replied Bartle, "I wish I had a thousand like you, not but I have fine fellows. Boys, the truth is this, you must all meet here to-morrow night, for the short an' long of it is that I'm goin' to run away wid a wife."

"Well," replied Redhead, "sure you can do that widout our assistance, if she's willin' to come."

"Willin'! why," replied Bartle, "it's by her own appointment we're goin'."

"An' if it is, then," said the Rouser, who, in truth, was the leader of the suspicious and disaffected party in Flanagan's Lodge, "what the blazes use have you for uz?"

"Rousin Redhead," said Bartle, casting a suspicious and malignant glance at him, "might I take the liberty of axin' what you mane by speaking of me in that disparagin' manner? Do you remimber your oath? or do you forget that you are bound by it to meet at twelve hours' notice or less, whinever you're called upon.—Dhar Chriestha! man, if I hear another word of the kind out o' your lips, down you go on the black list. Boys," he proceeded, with a wheedling look of good

* Meaning that in his present service he slept in the dwelling-house, and that he consequently could not stop out at night without observation.

humour to the rest, "we'll have neither spies nor stags here, come or go what may."

"Stags," replied Rousin Redhead, whose face had already become scarlet with indignation, "stags, you say, Bartle Flanagan! Arrah, boys, I wondher where is poor Connor O'Donovan by this time?"

"I suppose bushin' it afore now," observed our friend Dandy Duffy, whiffing his pipe. "I bushed it myself for a year an' a half, but, be Japers, I got sick of it. But any how, Bartle, you oughtn't to speak of stags, for although Connor refused to join us, *you* had no right to go inform upon him. Sure, only for the intherest that was made for him you'd have his blood on your sowl."

"An' if he had itself," observed one of Flanagan's friends, "'twould signify very little. The Bodagh desarved what he got, and more if he had got it. What right has he, one of our own purswadjion as he is, to hould out aginst us the way he does? Sure he's as rich as a Sassenach, an' devil resave the farden he'll subscribe toward our gettin' arms or ammunition, or toward difendin' us when we're brought to thrial. To hell's delights wid the dirty Bodagh, says myself for one."

"An' is that by way of a defince of Captain Bartle Flanagan?" inquired Rousin Redhead, indignantly. "An' so our worthy captain sint the man *acrass* that punished our inimy, even accordian to your own provin', and that by *staggin'* against him. Of coorse, had the miser's son been one of huz, Bartle's brains would be scatthered to the four quarthers of heaven long agone."

"An' how did I know but *he'd stag* aginst me," said Bartle, very calmly.

"Dam' well you knew he would *not*," observed Ned M'Cormick, now encouraged by the bold and decided manner of Rousin Redhead. "Before ever you went into Fardorougha's sarvice you sed to more than one that you'd make him sup sorrow for his harshness to your father and family."

"An' didn't he desarve it Ned? Didn't he ruin us?"

"*He* might desarve it, an' I suppose did; but what right had you to punish the innocent for the guilty? You *knewn* very well that both his son an' his wife always sot their faces aginst his doins."

"Boys," said Flanagan, "I don't undherstand this, and I tell you more, I won't bear it. This night let any of you that doesn't like to be undher me say so. Rousin Redhead, you'll never meet in a Riband lodge agin. You're scratched out of one book, but, by way of comfort, you're down in another."

"What other, Bartle?"

"The Black List. An' now I have nothin' more to say, except that if there's anything on your mind that wants absolution, look to it."

We must now pause for a moment to reflect upon that which we suppose the sagacity of the reader has already discovered—that is, the connexion between what occurred in Flanagan's lodge, and the last dialogue which took place between Nogher and Connor O'Donovan. It is evident that Nogher had spirits at work for the purpose both of watching and contravening all Flanagan's plans, and, if possible, of drawing him into some position which might justify the "few friends," as he termed them, first in disgracing him, and afterward of settling their account ultimately with a man whom they wished to blacken, as dangerous to the society of which they were members. The curse, however, of these secret confederacies, and indeed of ribandism in general, is, that the savage principle of personal vengeance is transferred from the nocturnal assault, or the midday assassination which may be directed against religious or political enemies, to the private bickerings and petty jealousies that must necessarily occur in a combination of ignorant and bigoted men, whose passions are guided by no principle but one of practical cruelty. This ex-

plains, as we have put it, and justly put it, the incredible number of murders which are committed in our unhappy country, under the name of waylayings and midnight attacks, where the offence that caused them cannot be traced by society at large, although it is an incontrovertible fact, that to all those who are connected with ribandism, in its varied phases, it often happens that the projection of such murders is known for weeks before they are perpetrated. The wretched assassin who murders a man that has never offended him personally, and who suffers himself to become the instrument of executing the hatred which originates from a principle of general enmity against *a class*, will not be likely, once his hands are stained with blood, to spare *any one* who may, by direct personal injury, incur his resentment. Every such offence, where secret societies are concerned, is made a matter of personal feeling, and a trial of strength between factions; and, of course, a similar spirit is superinduced among persons of the same creed and principles to that which actuates them against those who differ from them in politics and religion. It is true, that the occurrence of murders of this character has been referred to as a proof that secret societies are not founded or conducted upon a spirit of religious rancour; but such an assertion is, in some cases, the result of gross ignorance, and in many more, of far grosser dishonesty. Their murdering each other is not at all a proof of any such thing, but it is a proof, as we have said, that their habit of taking away human life, and shedding human blood upon slight grounds of political feelings, follows them from their conventional principles to their private resentments, and is, therefore, such a consequence as might naturally be expected to result from a combination of men, who in one sense consider murder no crime. Thus does this secret tyranny fall back upon society, as well as upon those who are con-

cerned in it, as a double curse; and, indeed, we believe that even the greater number of these unhappy wretches whom it keeps within its toils would feel happy that the principles were rooted out of the country for ever.

"An' so you're goin' to put my father down on the black list," said the beetle-browed son of Rouser. "Very well, Bartle, do so; but do you see that," he added, pointing to the sign of the coffin and cross bones which he had previously drawn upon the slate; "*dhar an sphirit Neev*,* if you do you'll waken some mornin' in a warmer counthry than Ireland."

"Very well," said Bartle, quietly, but evidently shrinking from a threat nearly as fearful, and far more daring, than his own, "you know I have nothin' to do except my duty. Yez are goin' against the CAUSE, an' I must report yez; afther that, whatever happens won't come from me, nor from any one here. It is from thim that's in higher quarthers you'll get your doom, an' not from me, or, as I said afore, from any one here. Mark that; but indeed you know it as well as I do, an' I believe, Rouser, a good deal betther."

Flanagan's argument, to men who understood its dreadful import, was one before which almost every description of personal courage must quail. Persons were then present, Rousin Redhead among the rest, who had been sent upon some of those midnight missions, which contumacy against the system, when operating in its cruelty, had occasioned. Persons of humane disposition declining to act in these sanguinary villanies are generally the first to be sacrificed, for, as in the case of the execrable Inquisition, individual life is nothing when obstructing the propagation of the general principle.

* The name of the third person of the Trinity is seldom sworn by in Ireland, unless when some dreadful purpose is determined on.

This truth, coming from Flanagan's lips, they themselves, some of whom had executed its spirit, knew but too well. The difference, however, between their apprehensions, so far as they were individually concerned, was not much; Flanagan had the person to fear, and his opponents the principle.

Redhead, however, who knew that whatever he had executed upon delinquents like himself might also upon himself be visited in his turn, saw that his safest plan for the present was to submit; for indeed the meshes of the Whiteboy system, like those of the Inquisition, leave no man's life safe, if he express hostile opinions against it.

"Bartle," said he, "you know I'm no coward; an' I grant you've a long head at plannin' anything you set about. I don't see, in the mane time, why, afther all, we should quarrel. You know *me*, Bartle; an' if anything happens me, *it won't be for nothin'*. I say no more; but I say still that you throw the danger upon uz, and don't—"

"Rousin Redhead," said Bartle, "give me your hand. I say now what I didn't wish to say to-night afore, by Japers, you're worth five men; an' I'll tell you all, boys, you must meet the Rouser here to-morrow night, an' we'll have a dhrink at my cost; an', boys—Rouser, hear me—you all know your oaths; we'll do something to-morrow night—an' I say agin, Rouser, I'll be wid yez an' among yez; an' to prove my opinion of the Rouser, I'll allow him to head us."

"An', by the crass o' Moses, I'll do it in style," rejoined the hot-headed but unthinking miscreant, who did not see that the adriot captain was placing him in the post of danger. "I don't care a damn what it is; we'll meet here to-morrow night, boys, an' I'll show you that I can lead as well as folly."

"Whatever happens," said Bartle, "we oughn't to

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have any words or bickerins among ourselves at any rate. I undherstand that two among yez struck one another. Sure yez know that there's not a blow yez give to a brother but's a perjury—and there's no use in that, barrin' in a righteous cause, an' to help forid the thruth. I'll say no more about it now; but I hope there'ill never be another blow given among yez. Now, get a hat some o' yez, till we draw cuts for six that I want to beat Tom Lynchaghan of Lisdhu; he's workin' for St. Ledger, afther gettin' two notices. He's a quiet, civil man, no doubt: but that's not the thing. We must have obadience, or where's the use of our meetins at all? Give him a sound batin', but no farther—break no bones."

He then marked slips of paper, equal in number to those who were present, with the numericals 1, 2, 3, &c., to correspond with, after which he determined that the first three numbers and last three should go—all which was agreed to without remonstrance, or any apparent show of reluctance whatever.

"Now, boys," he continued, "don't forget to attend to-morrow night; an' I say to every man of you, as Darby Spaight said to the divil, whin he promised to join the rebellion, *be dha pheeka laght* (bring your pike with you)—bring the weapons."

"An' who's the purty girl that's goin' to get you, Captain Bartle?" inquired Dandy Duffy.

"The purtiest girl in this parish, any how," replied Flanagan, unawares. The words, however, were scarcely out of his lips, when he felt that he had been indiscreet. He immediately added, "that is, if she *is* of this parish; but I didn't say she is. Maybe we'll have to thravel a bit to find her out; but come what may, don't neglect to be all here about half past nine o' clock, wid your arms an' ammunition."

Duffy, who had sat beside Ned M'Cormick during the night, gave him a significant look, which the other, who,

in truth, joined himself to Flanagan's lodge only to watch his movements, as significantly returned.

When the men deputed to beat Lynchaghan had blackened their faces, the lodge dispersed for the night, the two latter taking their way home together, in order to consider of that which they had just seen.

CHAPTER VII.

INDEED, it was no wonder that Dandy Duffy and Ned M'Cormick should have exchanged significant glances with each other, upon Flanagan's having admitted unawares that the female he designed to take away on the following night was "the purtiest girl in the parish." The truth was, he imagined at the moment that his designs were fully matured, and in the secret vanity, or rather, we would say, in the triumphant villany, of his heart, he allowed an expression incautiously to pass his lips which was nearly tantamount to an admission of Una's name. The truth of this he instantly felt. But even had he not by his own natural sagacity perceived it, the look of mutual intelligence which his quick and suspicious eye observed to pass between Duffy and Ned M'Cormick, would at once have convinced him. Una was not merely entitled to the compliment so covertly bestowed upon her extraordinary personal attractions, but, in addition, it might have been truly affirmed, that neither that nor any adjoining parish could produce a female, in any rank, who could compete with her in the character of a rival beauty.

This was admitted by all who had ever seen the *colleen dhas dhun*, or "the purty brown girl," as she was called, and it followed, as a matter of course, that Flanagan's words could imply no other than the Bodagh's daughter.

It is unnecessary to say that Flanagan, knowing this as he did, could almost have bit a portion of his own tongue off as a punishment for its indiscretion. It was then too late, however, to efface the impression which

the words were calculated to make, and he felt, besides, that he would only strengthen the suspicion by an over anxiety to remove it. He therefore repeated his orders respecting the appointed meeting on the following night, although he had already resolved, in consequence of his indiscretion, to change the whole plan of his operations.

Such was the precaution with which this cowardly but accomplished miscreant proceeded toward the accomplishment of his purposes, and such was his apprehension lest the premature suspicion of a single individual might by contingent treachery defeat his design, or affect his personal safety. He had made up his mind to communicate the secret of his enterprise to none until the very moment of its execution; and this being effected, his ultimate plans were laid, as he thought, with sufficient skill to baffle pursuit, and defeat either the malice of his enemies or the vengeance of the law.

No sooner had they left the schoolhouse than the Dandy and M'Cormick immediately separated from the rest, in order to talk over the proceedings of the night, with a view to their suspicions of the "Captain." They had not gone far, however, when they were overtaken by two others, who came up with them at a quick, or, if I may be allowed the expression, an earnest pace. The two latter were Rousin Redhead and his son Corney.

"So, boys," said the Rouser, "what do you think of our business to-night? Didn't I get well out of his clutches?"

"Be me throth, Rouser darlin'," replied the Dandy, "you niver wor complately *in* them till this minnit."

"*Dhar ma lham charth*,"* said Corney, "I say he's a black-hearted villin, and *damnho orm* but it 'ud be aquil to absolution from the priest's hand to knock him on the head."

* By my right hand.

"But how am I *in* his clutches, Dandy?" inquired the Rouser.

"Why," rejoined Duffy, "don't you see that, for all you said about his throwin' the post of danger on other people, he's givin it to you to-morrow night."

Rousin Redhead stood still for nearly half a minute without uttering a syllable; at length he seized Dandy by the arm, which he pressed with the grip of Hercules, for he was a man of huge size and strength.

"*Chorp an dioual*, you giant, is it my arm you're goin' to brake?"

"Be the 'tarnel primmer, Dandy Duffy, but I see it now," said the Rouser, struck by Bartle's address, and indignant at the idea of being overreached by him. "Eh, Corney," he continued, addressing his son, "hasn't he the Rouser *set?* I see boys, I see. I'm a marked man wid him, an' it's likely, for all he said, will be on the black list afore he sleeps. Well, Corney avic, you and others know how to act if anything happens me."

"I don't think," said M'Cormick, who was a lad of considerable penetration, "that you need be afeard of either him or the black list. Be me sowl, I know the same Bartle well, an' a bigger coward never put a coat on his back. He got as pale as a sheet to-night when Corney there threatened him; not but he's desateful enough, I grant; but he'd be a greater tyrant, only he's so hen-hearted."

"But what job," said the Rouser, "has he for us to-morrow night, do you think? It must be somethin' past the common. Who the *dioual* can he have in his eye to run away wid?"

"Who's the purtiest girl in the parish, Rouser?" asked Ned. "I thought every one knew that."

"Why you don't mane for to say," replied Redhead "that he'd have the spunk in him to run away wid Bodagh Buie's daughter? Be the contents o' the book, if I thought he'd thry it, I'd stick to him like a Throjan; the dirty Bodagh, that, as Larry Lawdher said to-night,

never backed or supported us, or gev a single rap to help us, if a penny 'ud save one of us from the gallis. The divil's delights to him an' all belongin' to him, I say too; an' I tell you what it is, boys, *dhar Chriestha*, if Flanagan has the manliness to take away his daughther, I'll be the first to sledge the door in to pieces."

"*Dhar a spiridh*, an' so will I," said the young beetle-browed tiger beside him; "thim that can an' won't help on the cause desarves no marcy from it."

Thus spoke from the lips of ignorance and brutality that *esprit du corps* of blood, which never scruples to sacrifice all minor resentments to any opportunity of extending THE CAUSE, as it is termed, or that ideal monster, in the promotion of which the worst principles of our nature, still the most active, are sure to experience the greatest glut of low and gross gratification. Oh, if reason, virtue, and true religion, were only as earnest and vigorous in extending their own cause, as ignorance, persecution, and bigotry, how soon would society present a different aspect. But, unfortunately, *they cannot* stoop to call in the aid of tyrranny, and eruelty, and bloodshed, nor of the thousand other atrocious allies of falsehood and dishonesty, of which ignorance, craft, and cruelty never fail to avail themselves, and without which they could not proceed successfully.

M'Cormick having heard Rousin Redhead and his son utter such sentiments, did not feel at all justified in admitting them to any confidence with himself or Duffy. He accordingly replied with more of adroitness than of candour to the savage sentiments they expressed.

"Faith, you're right, Rouser; he'd never have spunk, sure enough, to carry off the Bodagh's daughter. But in the mane time, who was spakin' about her? Begor, if I thought he had the heart I'd—but he hasn't."

"I know he hasn't," said the Rouser.

"He's nothin' but a white-livered dog," said Duffy.

"I thought, to tell you the truth," said M'Cormick,

"that you might give a guess as to the girl; but for the Bodagh's daughter, he has *not* the mettle for that."

"If he had," replied the Rouser, "he might count upon Corney an' myself as right-hand men. We all have a crow to pluck wid the dirty Bodagh, an' be me zounds, it'ill puzzle him to find a bag to hould the feathers."

"One 'ud think he got enough," observed M'Cormick, "in the loss of his haggard."

"But that didn't come from *us*," said the Rouser; "we have our share to give him yet, an' never fear he'll get it. We'll taich him to abuse us, and set us at defiance, as he's constantly doin'."

"Well, Rouser," said M'Cormick, who now felt anxious to get rid of him, "we'll be wishin' you a good night; we're a goin' to have a while of a *kailyeah** up at my uncle's. Corney, my boy, good night."

"Good night kindly, boys," replied the others, "an' *banaght laht*† any how."

"Rouser, you divil," said the Dandy, calling after them, "will you an' blessed Corney there offer up a Pattheranavy for my conversion, for I'm sure that both your prayers will go far."

Rousin Redhead and Corney responded to this with a loud laugh and a banter.

"Ay, ay, Dandy; but, be me soul, if they only go as far as your own goodness sint you before now, it'ill be *seven years* before they come back agin. Eh, do you smell anything? ha, ha, ha!"

"The big bosthoon hot me fairly, begad," observed the Dandy, aside. "The divil's own tongue he has. Bad cess to you, for a walkin' bonfire, an' go home," replied the Dandy; "I'm not a match for you wid the tongue, at all at all."

"No, nor wid anything else, barrin your heels," replied the Rouser; "or your hands, if there was a horse in the way. Arrah, Dandy?"

* An evening conversational visit. † Our blessing be with you.

"Well, you graceful youth, well?"

"You ought to be a good workman by this time; you first larned your thrade, an' thin you put in your seven years' apprenticeship*—ha, ha, ha!"

"Faith, an', Rouser, I can promise you a merry end, my beauty; you'll be the only man that'll dance at your own funeral? an' I'll tell you what, Rouser, it'll be like an egg hornpipe, wid your eyes covered. That's what I call an active death, avouchal!"

"Faith, an' if you wor a priest, Dandy, you'd be sure to die with your face to the congregation. You'll be a rope-dancer yourself yet; only this, Dandy, that you'll be undher the rope instead of over it; so good night."

"Rouser," exclaimed the other, "Rouser Redhead!"

"Go home," replied the Rouser. "Good night, I say; you've thravelled a great deal too far for an ignorant man like me to stand any chance wid you. Your tongue's lighter than your hands† even, and that's payin' it a high compliment."

"Divil sweep you, Brien," said Dandy, "you'd beat the divil an' Docthor Fosther. Good night agin!"

"Oh, *ma bannaght laht*, I say."

And they accordingly parted.

"Now," said Ned, "what's to be done, Dandy? As sure as gun's iron, this limb of hell will take away the Bodagh's daughther, if we don't do something to prevent it."

"I'm not puttin' it past him," returned his companion, "but *how* to prevent it is the thing. He has the boys all on his side, barrin' yourself and me an' a few more."

"An' you see, Ned, the Bodagh is so much hated that even some of thim that don't like Flanagan won't scruple to join him in this."

"An' if we wor known to let the cat out o' the bag to the Bodagh, we might as well prepare our coffins at wanst."

* Alluding to the term of his transportation.

† In Ireland to be light-handed signifies to be a thief.

"Faith, sure enough—that's but gospel, Ned," replied the Dandy; "still it 'ud be the *milliah* murdhers to let the double-faced villin carry off sich a girl."

"I'll tell you what you'll do thin, Dandy," rejoined Ned; "what if you'd walk down wid me as far as the Bodagh's?"

"For why? Sure they're in bed now, man alive."

"I know that," said M'Cormick; "but how-an'-ever, if you come down wid me that far, I'll conthrive to get in somehow, widout wakenin' them."

"The dickens you will! How the sorra, man?"

"No matther, I will; an' you see," he added, pulling out a flask of spirits, "I'm not goin' impty handed."

"Phew!" exclaimed Duffy, "is it there you are? oh, that indeed! Faith, I got a whisper of it some time ago, but it wint out o' my head. Biddy Nulty, faix—a nate clean girl she is too."

"But that's not the best of it, Dandy. Sure, blood alive, I can tell you a sacret—may I depind?"

"Honour bright!"

"The Bodagh's daughter, man, 's to give her a portion, in regard of her bein' so thrue to Connor O'Donovan. Bad luck to the oath she'd swear aginst him if they'd make a queen of her, but outdone the counsellors and lawyers, an' all the whole bobbery o' them, whin they wanted her to turn king's evidence. Now, it's not but I'd do anything to sarve the purty Bodagh's daughter widout it; but you see, Dandy, if White-liver takes her away, I may stand a bad chance for the portion."

"Say no more; I'll go wid you; but how will you get in, Ned?"

"Never you mind that; here, take a pull out of this flask before you go any farther. Blood an' flummery! what a night; divil a my finger I can see before me. Here—where's your hand?—that; warm your heart, my boy."

"You intend thin, Ned, to give Biddy the hard word about Flanagan?"

"Why, to bid her put them on their guard; sure there can be no harm in that."

"They say, Ned, it's not safe to trust a woman; what if you axe to see the Bodagh's son, the young sogarth."

"I'd trust my life to Biddy—she that was so honest to the Donovans wouldn't be desateful to her sweetheart that—he—hem—she's far gone in consate wid—your sowl. Her brother Alick's to meet me at the Bodagh's on his way from his Lodge, for they hould a meetin' to-night too."

"Never say it agin. I'll stick to you; so push an, for it's late. You'll be apt to make up the match before you part, I suppose?"

"That won't be hard to do any time, Dandy."

Both then proceeded down the same field which we have already said was called the Black Park, in consequence of its dark and mossy soil. Having with some difficulty found the stile at the lower end of it, they passed into a short car track, which they were barely able to follow.

The night, considering that it was the month of November, was close and foggy; such as frequently follows a calm day of incessant rain. The bottoms were plashy, the drains all full, and the small rivulets and streams about the country were up above their banks, while the larger rivers swept along with the hoarse continuous murmurs of an unusual flood. The sky was one sheet of darkness; for not a cloud could be seen, or anything except the passing gleam of a cottage taper, lessened by the haziness of the night into a mere point of faint light, and thrown by the same cause into a distance which appeared to the eye much more remote than that of reality.

After having threaded their way for nearly a mile, the water spouting almost at every step up to their knees, they at length came to an old bridle way, deeply shaded with hedges on each side. They had not spoken

much since the close of their last dialogue; for the truth is, each had enough to do, independently of dialogue, to keep himself out of drains and quagmires. An occasional "hanamondiouol, I'm in to the hinches;" "holy St. Pether, I'm stuck;" "tundher an' turf, where are you at all?" or "by this an' by that, I dunna where I am," were the only words that passed between them, until they reached the little road we are speaking of, which, in fact, was one unbroken rut, and on such a night almost impassable.

"Now," said M'Cormick, "we mustn't keep this divil's gut, for conshumin' to the shoe or stockin' ever we'd bring out of it; however, do you follow me, Dandy, an' there's no danger."

"I can do nothing else," replied the other, "for I know no more where I am than the man o' the moon, who, if all's true that's sed of him, is the biggest blockhead alive."

M'Cormick, who knew the path well, turned off the road into a pathway that ran inside the hedge and along the fields, but parallel with the muddy boreen in question. They now found themselves upon comparatively clear ground, and, with the exception of an occasional slip or two, in consequence of the heavy rain, they had little difficulty in advancing. At this state of their journey not a light was to be seen, nor a sound of life heard, and it was evident that the whole population of the neighbourhood had sunk to rest.

"Where will this bring us to, Ned?" asked the Dandy. "I hope we'll soon be at the Bodagh's."

M'Cormick stood and suddenly pressed his arm. "Whist," said he, in an under tone, "I think I hard voices."

"No," replied the other, in the same low tone.

"I am sure I did," said Ned; "take my word for it, there's people before us on the boreen—whist!"

They both listened, and very distinctly heard a confused but suppressed murmur of voices, apparently

about a hundred yards before them on the little bridle-way. Without uttering a word, they both proceeded as quietly and quickly as possible, and in a few minutes nothing separated them but the hedge. The party on the road were wallowing through the mire with great difficulty, many of them, at the same time, bestowing very energetic execrations upon it, and upon those who suffered it to remain in such a condition. Even the oaths, however, were uttered in so low and cautious a tone, that neither M'Cormick nor the Dandy could distinguish their voices so clearly as to recognise those who spoke, supposing that they had known them. Once or twice they heard the clashing of arms, or of iron instruments of some sort, and it seemed to them that the noise was occasioned by the accidental jostling together of those who carried them. At length they heard one voice exclaim rather testily: "D—n your blood, Bartle Flanagan, will you have patience till I get my shoe out o' the mud; you don't expect me to lose it, do you? We're not goin' to get a purty wife, whatever you may be."

The reply to this was short, but pithy: "May all the divils in hell's fire pull the tongue out o' you, for nothin' but hell itself, you villin, timpted me to bring you wid me."

This was not intended to be heard, nor was it, by the person against whom it was uttered, he being some distance behind; but as Ned and his companion were at the moment exactly on the other side of the hedge, they could hear the words of this precious soliloquy—for such it was—delivered as they were, with a suppressed energy of malignity worthy of the heart that suggested them.

M'Cormick immediately pulled Duffy's coat without speaking a word, as a hint to follow him with as little noise as possible, which he did, and ere many minutes they were so far in advance of the

others as to be enabled to converse without risk of being heard.

"*Dhar Dheah*, Duffy," said his companion, "there's not a minute to be lost."

"There is not," replied the other; "but what will you do with me? I'll lend a hand in any way I can, but remimber that if we're seen, or if it's known that we go against them in this—"

"I know," said the other, "we're *gone** *men*; still we must manage it somehow, so as to save the girl. God! if it was only on Connor O'Donovan's account, that's far away this night, I'd do it. Dandy, you wor only a boy whin Blennerhasset prosecuted you, an' people pitied you at the time, and now they don't think much the worse of you for it; an' you know it was proved since, that what you said then was thrue, that other rouges made you do it, and thin left you in the lurch. But, d—n it, where's the use of all this? give me your hand—it's life or death—can I trust you?"

"You may," said the other, "you may, Ned; do whatsomever you wish with me."

"Then," continued Ned, "I'll go into the house, and do you keep near them widout bein' seen; watch their motions; but above all things, if they take her off—folly on till you see where they'll bring her; after that they can get backin' enough—the sogers, if they're a wantin'."

"Depind an me, Ned; to the core depind an me."

They had now reached the Bodagh's house, upon which, as upon every other object around them, the shadows of night rested heavily. The Dandy took up his position behind one of the porches of the gate that divided the little grassplot before the hall door, and the farmyard, as being the most central spot,

* Lost men.

and one from which he could with more ease hear, or, as far as might be, observe, the plan and nature of their proceedings.

It was at least fifteen minutes before Flanagan's party reached the little avenue that led up to the Bodagh's residence; for we ought to have told our readers, that M'Cormick and Duffy having taken a short path, left the others—who, being ignorant of it, were forced to keep to the road—considerably behind. Ned was consequently from ten to fifteen minutes in the house previous to their arrival. At length they approached silently, and with that creeping pace which betokens either fear or caution, as the case may be, and stood outside the gate which led into the grassplot before the hall door, not more than three or four yards from the porch of the farmyard gate where the Dandy was concealed. And here he had an opportunity of beholding the extreme skill with which Flanagan conducted this nefarious exploit. After listening for about a minute, he found that their worthy leader was not present, but he almost immediately discovered that he was engaged in placing guards upon all the back windows of the dwelling-house and kitchen. During his absence the following short consultation took place among those whom he left behind him for the purpose of taking a personal part in the enterprise:

"It was too thrue what Rousin Redhead said to-night," observed one of them; "he always takes care to throw the post of danger on some one else. Now, it's not that I'm afeard, but as he's to have the girl himself, it's but fair that his own neck should run the first danger, an' not mine."

They all assented to this.

"Well, then, boys," he proceeded, "if yez support me, we'll make him head this business himself. It's his own consarn, not ours; an' besides, as he houlds the Articles, it's his duty to lead us in everything. So, be the saykerment, I, for one, won't take away

his girl, an' himself keepin' back. If there's any one here that'll take my place or his, let him now say so."

They were all silent as to *that* point; but most of them said, they wished, at all events, to give "the dirty Bodagh," for so they usually called him, something to remember them by, in consequence of his having, on all occasions, stood out against the system.

"Still it's fair," said several of them, "that in takin' away the colleen, Bartle should go foremost, as she's for himself an' not for huz."

"Well, then, you all agree to this?"

"We de; but whist, here he is."

Deeply mortified was their leader on finding that they had come unanimously to this determination. It was too late now, however, to reason with them, and the crime, to the perpetration of which he brought them, too dangerous in its consequences to render a quarrel with them safe or prudent. He felt himself therefore in a position which, of all others, he did not covet. Still his adroitness was too perfect to allow any symptoms of chagrin or disappointment to be perceptible in his voice or manner, although the truth is, he cursed them in his heart at the moment, and vowed in some shape or other to visit their insubordination with vengeance.

Such, indeed, is the nature of those secret confederacies that are opposed to the laws of the land and the spirit of religion. It matters litile how open and apparently honest the conduct of such men may be among each other: there is, notwithstanding this, a distrust, a fear, a suspicion lurking at every heart, that renders personal security unsafe and life miserable. But how indeed can they repose confidence in each other, when they know that, in consequence of their connexion with such systems, many of the civil duties of life cannot be performed without perjury on the one hand, or risk of life on the other, and that the whole

principle of the combination is founded upon hatred, revenge, and a violation of all moral obligation. No church but the church that grapples with the secrets of the heart can crush this; but wo to the church that can and will not.

"Well then," said their leader, "as your minds is made up, boys, folly me as quietly as you can, an' don't spake a word in your own voices."

They approached the hall door, with the exception of six, who stood guarding the front windows of the dwelling-house and kitchen; and to the Dandy's astonishment, the whole party, amounting to about eighteen, entered the house without either noise or obstruction of any kind.

"By Japers," thought he to himself, "there's thraichery there any how."

This now to the Dandy was a moment of intense interest. Though by no means a coward, or a young fellow of delicate nerves, yet his heart beat furiously against his ribs, and his whole frame shook with excitement. He would, in truth, much rather have been engaged in the outrage, than forced, as he was, merely to look on without an opportunity of taking a part in it, one way or the other. Such, at least, were his own impressions when the report of a gun was heard inside the house.

"*Dhar an Iffrin*,"* thought he again, "I'll boult an' see what's goin' an—*oh ma shaght millia mallach orth*,† Flanagan, if you spill blood, Jasus above! Well, any how, come or go what may, we can hang him for this, glory be to God!"

These reflections were very near breaking forth into words.

"*Dhar toasha*, I don't like that," said one of the guards to another; "he may take the girl away, but

* By the Mass. † Seven hundred thousand curses on you.

it's not the thing to murdher any one belongin' to a dacent family, an' of our own religion."

"If it's only the Bodagh got it," replied his comrade, who was no other than Mickey Mulvather, "divil the hair I care. When my brother Barney that suffered for *Caam Beal* (crooked mouth) Grime's business, was before his thrial, divel resave the taisther the same Bodagh would give to defind him."

"Damn it," rejoined the other, "but to murdher a man in his bed! Why now, if it was even comin' home from a fair or market, but at midnight, an' in his bed, begorra, it is not the thing, Mickey."

There was now a pause in the conversation for some minutes; at length screams were heard, and the noise of men's feet, as if engaged in a scuffle upon the stairs, for the hall door lay open. A light, too, was seen, but it appeared to have been blown out; the same noise of feet, trampling, as if still in a tumult, approached the door, and almost immediately afterward Flanagan's party approached, bearing in their arms a female, who panted and struggled as if she had been too weak to shriek or call for assistance. The hall door was then pulled to and locked by those who were outside.

The Dandy could see, by the passing gleam of light which fell upon those who watched beside him, that their faces were blackened, and their clothes covered by a shirt, as was usual with the whiteboys of old, and for the same object—that of preventing themselves from being recognised by their apparel.

"So far, so good," said Flanagan, who cared not now whether his voice was known or not; "the prize is mine, boys, an' now to bring *ma colleen dhas dhun* to a snug place, an' a friendly priest that I have to put the knot on us for life."

"Be *heaventhers*," thought Duffy, "I'll put a different kind of knot on you for that, if I should swing myself for it."

They hurried onward with as much speed as possible, bearing the fainting female in a seat formed by clasping their hands together. Duffy still stood in his place of concealment, waiting to let them get so far in advance as that he might dog them without danger of being heard. Just then a man cautiously approached, and in a whisper asked, "Is that Dandy?"

"It is; Ned, how is this? all's lost!"

"No, no, I hope not; but go an' watch them; we'll folly as soon as we get help. My curse on Alick Nulty, he disappointed me an' didn't come; if he had, why some of the Bodagh's servant boys would be up wid us in the kitchen, an' we could bate them back aisy; for Flanagan, as I tould you, is a coward."

"Well, thin, I'll trace thim," replied the other; "but you know in sich darkness as this, you haven't a minnit to lose, otherwise you'll miss them."

"Go an, but afore you go listen, be the light of day, not that we have much af it now any way—by the vestment, Biddy Nulty's worth her weight in bank of Ireland notes; now pelt an afther them; I'll tell you agin."

Flanagan's party were necessarily forced to retrace their steps along the sludgy boreen we have mentioned, and we need scarcely say, that, in consequence of the charge with which they were encumbered, their progress was proportionably slow; to cross the fields on such a night was out of the question.

The first thing Flanagan did, when he found his prize safe, was to tie a handkerchief about her mouth, that she might not scream, and to secure her hands together by the wrists. Indeed, the first of these precautions seemed to be scarcely necessary, for what with the terror occasioned by such unexpected and frightful violence, and the extreme delicacy of her health, it was evident that she could not utter even a shriek. Yet did she, on the other hand, lapse into fits of such spasmodic violence as, wrought up as she was by the hor-

ror of her situation, called forth all her physical energies, and literally gave her the strength of three women.

"Well, well," observed one of the fellows who had assisted in holding her down during these wild fits, "you may talk of jinteel people, but, be the piper o' Moses, that same sick daughter of the Bodagh's is the hardiest sprout I've laid my hands on this month o' Sundays."

"Maybe you'd make as hard a battle yourself," replied he to whom he spoke, "if you wor forced to a thing you hate as much as she hates Bartle."

"Maybe so," rejoined the other, with an incredulous shrug, that seemed to say he was by no means satisfied by the reasoning of his companion.

Bartle now addressed his charge with a hope of reconciling her, if possible, to the fate of becoming united to him.

"Don't be at all alarmed, Miss Oona, for indeed you may take my word for it, that I'll make as good and as lovin' a husband as ever had a purty wife. It's two or three years since I fell in consate wid you, an' I needn't tell you, darlin', how happy I am now that you're mine. I have two horses waitin' for us at the end of this vile road, an' plase Providence, we'll ride onward a bit, to a friend's house of mine, where I've a priest ready to tie the knot; an' to-morrow, if you're willin', we'll start for America; but if you don't like that, we'll live together till you'll be willin' enough, I hope, to go any where I wish. So take heart, darlin', take heart. As for the money I made free wid out o' your desk, it'll help to keep us comfortable; it was your own, you know, an' who has a betther right to be at the spendin' of it?"

This, which was meant for consolation, utterly failed, or rather aggravated the sufferings of the affrighted girl they bore, who once more struggled with a power that resembled the intense muscular strength of epilepsy, more than anything else. It literally required four of

them to hold her down, so dreadfully spasmodic were her efforts to be free.

The delay caused by those occasional workings of terror, at a moment when Flanagan expected every sound to be the noise of pursuit, wrought up his bad passions to a furious height. His own companions could actually hear him grinding his teeth with vexation and venom, whenever anything on her part occurred to retard their flight. All this, however, he kept to himself, owing to the singular command he possessed over his passions. Nay, he undertook once more the task of reconciling her to the agreeable prospect, as he termed it, that life presented to her.

"We'll be as happy as the day's long," said he, "espishilly when Heaven sends us a family; an', upon my throth, a purty mother you'll make. I suppose, darlin' love, you wondher how I got in to-night, but I tell you, I've my wits about me; you don't know that it was I encouraged Biddy Nulty to go to live wid you, but I knew what I was about then; Biddy it was that left the door open for me, an' that tould me the room you lay in, an' the place you keep your hard goold and notes in; I mintion these things to show you how I had you hemmed in, an' that your wisest way is to submit widout makin' a rout about it. You know that even if you wor taken from me this minnit, there 'ud be a stain upon your name that 'ud never lave it, an' it wouldn't be my business, you know, to clear up your character, but the conthrary. As for Biddy, the poor fool, I did all in my power to prevent her being fond o' me, but ever since we two lived wid the ould miser, somehow she couldn't."

For some time before he had proceeded thus far, there was felt by those who carried their fair charge, a slight working of her whole body, especially of the arms, and in a moment, Flanagan, who walked a little in advance of her, with his head bent down, that he might not be put to the necessity of speaking loud,

suddenly received, right upon his nose, such an incredible facer as made the blood spin a yard out of it.

"May all the curses of heaven an' hell blast you, for a cowardly, thraicherous, parjured *stag*—why, you black-hearted informer, see now what you've made by your cunnin'. Well, we hope you'll keep your word; won't I make a purty mother, an' won't we be as happy as the day's long, espishilly when Heaven sends us a family! Why you rap of hell, aren't you a laughin'-stock this minute? An' to go to take away my name too, an' to lave the guilt of some other body's thraichery on me, that you *knewn* in your burnin' sowl to be innocent; me, a poor girl that has only my name an' good character to carry me through the world. Oh, you mane-spirited, revengeful dog, for you're not a man, or you'd not go to take sich revinge upon a woman, an' all for sayin' an' puttin' it out on you, what I ever an' always will do, that you struv to hang Connor O'Donovan, knowin' that it was yourself did the crime the poor boy is now sufferin' for. Ha! may the sweetest an' bitterest of bad luck both meet upon you, you villin! Amin, I pray this night!"

The scene that followed this discovery, and the unexpected act which produced it, could not, we think, be properly described by either pen or pencil. Flanagan stood with his hands alternately kept to his nose, from which he flung away the blood, as it sprung out in a most copious stream. Two thirds, indeed, we might say three fourths, of his party were convulsed with suppressed laughter, nor could they prevent an occasional cackle from being heard, when forcibly drawing in their breath, in an effort not to offend their leader. The discovery of the mistake was, in itself, extremely ludicrous, but when the home truths uttered by Biddy, and the indescribable bitterness caused by the disappointment, joined to the home blow, were all put together, it might be said that the darkness of hell itself was not so black as the rage, hatred, and thirst of

vengeance which at this moment consumed Bartle Flanagan's heart. He who had laid his plans so artfully, that he thought failure in securing his prize impossible, now not only to feel that he was baffled by the superior cunning of a girl, and made the laughing-stock of his own party, who valued him principally upon his ability in such matters; but in addition to this, to have his heart and feelings torn, as it were, out of his body, and flung down before him and his confreres in all their monstrous deformity, and to be jeered at, moreover, and despised, and literally cuffed by the female who outreached him, this was too much; all the worst passions within him were fired, and he swore in his own heart a deep and blasphemous oath, that Biddy Nulty never should part from him unless as a degraded girl.

The incident we have just related happened so quickly, that Flanagan had not time to reply a single word, and Biddy followed up her imprecation by a powerful effort to release herself.

"Let me home this minnit, you villin," she continued; "now that you find yourself on the wrong scent, boys, don't hould me, nor back that ruffin in his villany."

"Hould her like hell," said Bartle, "an' tie her up wanst more; we'll gag you too, my lady, ay, will we. Take away your name! *Dhar Chriestha*, I'll take care you'll carry shame upon your face from this night to the hour of your death. Characther indeed! ho, by the cross, I'll lave you that little of that will go far wid you."

"Maybe not," replied Biddy; "the same God that disappointed you in hangin' Connor O'Donovan—"

"Damn you," said he, "take that;" and as he spoke he struck the poor girl a heavy blow in the cheek, which cut her deeply, and, for a short time, rendered her speechless.

"Bartle," said more than one of them, "that's onmanly, an' it's conthrary to the regulations."

"To perdition wid the regulations! Hasn't the vagabone drawn a pint of blood from my nose already? look at that," he exclaimed, throwing away a handful of the warm gore, "devil saize her, look at that. Ho be the—" He made another onset at the yet unconscious girl as he spoke, and would have inflicted still farther punishment upon her, were it not that he was prevented.

"Stop," said several of them, "if you wor over us fifty times, you won't lay another finger on her; that's wanst for all, so be quiet."

"Are yez threatenin' me?" he asked, furiously; but in an instant he changed his tone. "Boys dear," continued the wily but unmanly villain, "boys dear, can yez blame me? disappointed as I am by this—by this —*ha! anhien na sthreepa**—I'll—" but again he checked himself, and at length burst out into a bitter fit of weeping. "Look at this," he proceeded, throwing away another handful of blood, "I've lost a quart of it by her!"

"Be the hand of my body," said one of them in a whisper, "he's like every coward, it's at his own blood he's cryin'; be the vartue o' my oath, that man's not the thing to depind on."

"Is she tied an' gagged?" he then inquired.

"She is," replied those who tied her. "It was very asy done, Bartle, afther the blow you hot her."

"It wasn't altogether out of ill-will I hot her aither," he replied, "although, boys dear, you know how she vexed me; but you see, the thruth is, she'd 'a given us a great dale o' throuble in gettin' her quiet."

"An' you tuck the right way to do that," they replied, ironically; and then added, "Bartle Flanagan, you

* Ha! you daughter of a prostitute!

may thank the oaths we took, or be the crass, a single man of us wouldn't assist you in *this* consarn, afther your cowardly behaver to this poor girl. Takin' away the Bodagh's daughter was another thing; you had betther let the girl go home."

Biddy had now recovered, and heard this suggestion with joy, for the poor girl began to entertain serious apprehensions of Flanagan's revenge and violence if left alone with him; she could not speak, however, and those who bore her quickened their pace at his desire, as much as they could.

"No," said Bartle, artfully, "I'll keep her prisoner anyhow for this night. I had once a notion of marryin' her, an' may be, as I am disappointed in the other —but, we'll think of it. Now we're at the horses, an' we'll get an faster."

This was indeed true. After the journey we have just described, they had at length got out of the boreen, where, in the corner of the field, a little to the right, two horses, each saddled, were tied to the branch of a tree. They now made a slight delay until their charge should be got mounted, and were collected in a group on the road, when a voice called out, "Who goes there?"

"A friend to the guard?"

"Good morrow!"

"Good morrow mornin' to you."

"What Age are you in?"

"The end of the fifth."

"All right," said Bartle aloud; "now boys," he whispered to his own party, "we must tell them good-humouredly to pass on; that this is a runaway; jist a girl we're bringin' off wid us, an' to hould a hard cheek* about it. You know we'd do as much for them."

* To keep it secret.

Both parties now met, the strangers consisting of about twenty men.

"Well, boys," said the latter, "what's the fun?"

"Devil a thing but a girl we're helpin' a boy to take away. What's your own sport?"

"Begorra, we were in luck to-night; we got as purty a double-barrelled gun as ever you seen, an' a case o' murdherin' fine pistols."

"Success, ould heart! that's right; we'll be able to stand the heretics a tug whin the 'day' comes."

"Which of you is takin' away the girl, boys?" inquired one of the strangers.

"Begad, Bartle Flanagan, since there's no use in hidin' it when we're all '*up*' as we ought to be."

"Bartle Flanagan," said a voice, "Bartle Flanagan, is it? An' who's the girl?"

"Blur an' agers, Alick Nulty, don't be too curious. She comes from Bodagh Buie's."

Biddy, on hearing the voice of her brother, made another violent effort, and succeeded in partially working the gag out of her mouth; she screamed faintly, and struggled with such energy that her hands again became loose, and in an instant the gag was wholly removed.

"Oh, Alick, Alick, for the love o' God save me from Flanagan! it's me, your sisther Biddy, that's in it; save me, Alick, or I'll be lost: he has cut me to the bone wid a blow, an' the blood's pourin' from me."

Her brother flew to her. "Whisht, Biddy, don't be afeard," he exclaimed. "Boys," said he, "let my party stand by me; this is the way Bartle Flanagan keeps his oath."*

"Secure Bartle," said Biddy; "he robbed Bodagh Buie's house, an' has the money about him."

* One of the clauses of the Riband oath was, not to injure or maltreat the wife or sister of a brother Ribandman.

The horses were already on the road, but, in consequence of both parties filling up the passage in the direction which Bartle and his followers intended taking, the animals could not be brought through them without delay and trouble, even had there been no resistance offered to their progress.

"A robber too!" exclaimed Nulty; "that's more of his parjury to'ard uz. Bartle Flanagan, you're a thraitor, and you'll get a thraitor's death afore you're much ouldher. He's not fit to be among us," added Alick, addressing himself to both parties, "an' the thruth is, if we don't hang or settle him, he'll some day hang us."

"Bartle's no thraitor," said Mulvather, "but he's a thraitor that says he is."

The coming reply was interrupted by "Boys, good night to yez;" and immediately the clatter of a horse's feet was heard stumbling and floundering back along the deep stony boreen. "Be the vestments, he's off," said one of his party; "the cowardly villin's off wid himself the minnit he seen the appearance of danger."

"Sure enough, the bad dhrop's in him," exclaimed several on both sides. "But what he manes now I dunna?" "It'll be only a good joke to-morrow wid him," observed one of them; "but, boys, we must think how to manage him; I can't forgive him for the cowardly blow he hot the poor colleen here, an' for the same rason I didn't draw the knot so tight upon her as I could a' done."

"Was it you that nipped my arm?" asked Biddy.

"Faix, you may say that, an' it was to let you know that let him say as he would, afther what we seen of him to-night, we wouldn't allow him to thrate you badly, widout marryin' you first."

The night having been now pretty far advanced, the two parties separated in order to go to their

respective homes, Alick taking Biddy under his protection to her master's. As the way of many belonging to each lodge lay in the same direction, they were accompanied, of course, to the turn that led up to the Bodagh's house. Biddy, notwithstanding the severe blow she had got, related the night's adventure with much humour, dwelling upon her own part in the transaction with much glee.

"There's some traicherous villain in the Bodagh's," said she, "be it man or woman; for what 'ud you think but the hall door was left lyin' to only—neither locked nor boulted. But indeed, any how, it was the start was taken out o' me whin Ned M'Cormick—that *you* wor to meet in our kitchen, Alick—throth, I won't let *Kitty Lowry* wait up for *you* so long another time." She added this to throw the onus of the assignation off her own shoulders, and to lay it upon those of Alick and Kitty. "But any how, I had jist time to threw her clothes upon me and to get into her bed. Be me sowl, but I acted the fright and sickness in style. I wasn't able to spake a word, you persave, till we got far enough from the house to give Miss Oona time to hide herself. Oh, thin the robbin' villin, how he put the muzzle of his gun to the lock of Miss Oona's desk, whin he couldn't get the key, an' *blewn* it to pieces, and then he took every farden he could lay his hands upon."

She then detailed her own feelings during the abduction, in terms so ludicrously abusive of Flanagan, that those who accompanied her were exceedingly amused; for although what she said was strongly provocative of mirth, yet the chief cause of laughter lay in the vehement sincerity with which she spoke, and in the utter unconsciousness of uttering anything that was calculated to excite a smile. There is, however, a class of such persons, whose power of provoking laughter consists in the utter absence of humour. Those I speak of never laugh either at what they say

themselves, or at what any one else may say; but they drive on right ahead with an inverted originality that is perfectly irresistible.

CHAPTER VIII.

We must now beg the reader to accompany them to the Bodagh's, where a scene presented itself for which they were scarcely prepared. On approaching the house they could perceive, by the light glittering from the window chinks, that the family were in a state of alarm; but at this they were not surprised; for such a commotion in the house after what had occurred, was but natural. They went directly to the kitchen door, however, and rapped.

"Who is there?" said a voice within.

"It's Biddy; for the love o' God make haste, Kitty, an' open."

"What Biddy are you? I won't open."

"Biddy Nulty. You know me well enough, Kitty; so make haste an' open. Alick, mark my words," said she, in a low voice to her brother, "Kitty's the very one that practised the desate this night—that left the hall door open. Make haste, Kitty, I say."

"I'll do no sich thing indeed," replied the other; "it was you left the hall door open to-night, an' I hear you spakin' to fellows outside. I have too much regard for my masther's house an' family to let you or any one else in to-night. Come in the mornin'."

"Folly me, Alick," said Biddy, "folly me."

She went immediately to the hall door, and gave such a single rap with the knocker as brought more than Kitty to the spot.

"Who's there," inquired a voice, which she and her brother at once knew to be Ned M'Cormick's.

"Ned, for the love o' God let me an' Alick in," she replied; "we got away from the netarnal villin."

Instantly the door was opened, and the first thing Ned did was to put his arms about Biddy's neck and—we were going to say kiss her.

"Saints above," said he, "what's this?" on seeing that her face was dreadfully disfigured with blood.

"Nothing to signify," she replied; "but thanks be to God, we got clane away from the villin; or be the Paudheren Partha, the villin it was that got clane away from hus. How is Miss Oona?"

"She went over to a neighbour's house for safety," replied Ned, smiling, "an' will be back in a few minutes; but who do you think, above all men in the five quarthers o' the earth, we have got widin? Guess now."

"Who?" said Biddy; "why, I dunna, save—but no, it couldn't."

"Faix, but it could though," said Ned, mistaking her, as the matter turned out.

"Why, *nick na hoiah, no!* Connor O'Donovan back! Oh! no, no, Ned; that 'ud be too good news to be thrue."

The honest lad shook his head with an expression of regret that could not be mistaken as the exponent of a sterling heart. And yet, that the reader may perceive how near akin the one circumstance was to the other in his mind, we have only to say, that while the regret for Connor was deeply engraven on his features, yet the expression of triumph was as clearly legible as if his name had not been at all mentioned.

"Who then, Ned?" said Alick. "Who the dickens is it?"

"Why, divil resave the other than Bartle Flanagan himself—*secured*—and the constables sent for—an' plase the Saver, he'll be in the stone jug afore his head gets gray any how, the black-hearted villin."

It was even so; the circumstances accounting for it are very simple. Flanagan having mounted one of the

horses, made the best of his way from what he apprehended was likely to become a scene of deadly strife. Such was the nature of the road, however, that anything like a rapid pace was out of the question. When he had got over about half the boreen he was accosted in the significant terms of the Riband pass-word of that day.

"Good morrow."

"Good morrow mornin' to you."

"Arrah what age may you be, neighbour?"

Now the correct words were, "What age are we in?" but they were often slightly changed, sometimes through ignorance, and sometimes from design, as in the latter case less liable to remark when addressed to persons not *up*. "In the end of the Fifth," was the reply.

"An' if you wor shakin' hands wid a friend, how would you do it? Or stay; all's right so far; but give us a grip of your *lham dhas* (right hand)."

Flanagan, who apprehended pursuit, was too cautious to trust himself within reach of any one coming from the direction in which the Bodagh lived. He made no reply, therefore, to this, but urged his horse forward, and attempted to get clear of his catechist.

"*Dhar Dhea!* it's Flanagan," said a voice, which was that of Ned M'Cormick; and the next moment the equestrian was stretched in the mud by a heavy blow from the butt of a carbine. Nearly a score of men were immediately about him; for the party he met on his return were the Bodagh's son, his servants, and such of the cottiers as lived near enough to be called up to the rescue. On finding himself secured, he lost all presence of mind, and almost all consciousness of his situation.

"I'm gone," said he; "I'm a lost man; all Europe can't save my life. Don't kill me, boys; don't kill me; I'll go wid yez quietly; only if I'm to die, let me die by the laws of the land."

"The laws of the land!" said John O'Brien; "oh, little, Bartle Flanagan, you respected them. You needn't be alarmed now; you are safe here; to the laws of the land we will leave you; and by them you must stand or fall."

Bartle Flanagan, we need scarcely say, was well guarded until a posse of constables should arrive to take him into custody. But in the mean time a large and increasing party sat up in the house of the worthy Bodagh; for the neighbours had been alarmed, and came flocking to his aid. 'Tis true, the danger was now over; but the kind Bodagh, thankful in his heart to the Almighty for the escape of his daughter, would not let them go without first partaking of his hospitality. His wife, too, for the same reason, was in a flutter of delight; and as her heart was as Irish as her husband's, and consequently as hospitable, so did she stir about and work, and order right and left until abundant refreshments were smoking on the table. Nor was the gentle and melancholy Una herself, now that the snake was at all events scotched, averse to show herself among them, for so they would have it. Biddy Nulty had washed her face; and notwithstanding the poultice of stirabout which her mistress with her own hands applied to her wound, she really was the most interesting person present, in consequence of her heroism during the recent outrage. After a glass of punch had gone round, she waxed inveterately eloquent, indeed so much so that the mourner, the *colleen dhas dhun*, herself was more than once forced to smile, and in some instances fairly to laugh at the odd grotesque spirit of her description.

"The rascal was quick," said the Bodagh; "but upon my credit, Biddy, you were a pop before him for all that. Divil a thing I, or John, or the others, could do wid only one gun an' a case o' pistols against so many—still we would have fought life or death for poor

Una, anyhow. But Biddy here, good girl, by her cleverness and invintion, saved us the danger, an' maybe was the manes of savin' some of our lives or theirs. God knows I'd have no relish to be shot myself," said the pacific Bodagh, "nor would I ever have a day or night's pace if I had the blood of a fellow-crathur on my sowl; upon my sowl I wouldn't."

"But, blood alive, masther, what could I 'a done only for Ned M'Cormick, that gave us the hard word?" said Biddy, anxious to transfer the merit of the transaction to her lover.

"Well, well, Bid," replied the Bodagh, "maybe neither Ned nor yourself will be a loser by it. If you're bint on layin' your heads together, we'll find you a wedding present, anyway."

"Bedad, sir, I'm puzzled to know how they got in so asy," said Ned.

"That matter remains to be cleared up yet," said John. "There is certainly treason in the camp somewhere."

"I am cock sure the hall door was not latched," said Duffy; "for they had neither stop nor stay at it."

"There is a villing among us sartinly," observed Mrs. O'Brien; "for as heaving is above me, I locked it wid my own two hands this blessed night."

"I thought it might be wid the kay, Bridget," said the Bodagh, laughing at his own easy joke; "for you see, doors is ginerally locked wid kays—ha! ha! ha!"

"Faix, but had Oona been tuck away to-night wid that vag o' the world, it's not laughin' you'd be."

"God, he sees, that's only thruth, too, Bridget," he replied; "but still there's some rogue about the place that opened the door for the villins."

"*Dar ma chuirp*, I'll hould goold I'll put the saddle on the right horse in no time," said Biddy. "Misthress, will you call Kitty Lowry, ma'am, i' you plase;

I'll do everything above boord; no behind backs for me; blazes to the one alive hates foul play more nor I do."

We ought to have observed that one of Biddy's peculiarities was a more than usual readiness at letting fly, and not unfrequently at coining, an oath; and as her character presented a strange compound of simplicity and cleverness, honesty and adroitness, her master, and mistress, and fellow-servants were frequently amused by this unfeminine propensity. For instance, if Una happened to ask her, "Biddy, did you iron the linen?"

Her usual reply was, "No, blast the iron, miss, I hadn't time." Of course the family did everything in their power to discourage such a practice; but on this point they found it impossible to reform her. Kitty Lowry's countenance, when she appeared, certainly presented strong indications of her guilt; but still there was a hardness of outline about it which gave promise at the same time of the most intrepid assurance. Biddy, on the other hand, was brimful of consequence; and a sense of authority on finding that the judicial power was on this occasion intrusted chiefly to her hands. She rose up when Kitty entered, and stuck a pair of red formidable fists with great energy into her sides.

"Pray, ma'am," said she, "what's the raison you refused to let me in to-night, afther gettin away wid my life from that netarnal blackguard, Bartle Flanagan—what's the raison, I say, ma'am, that you kep me out after you *knewn* who was in it?"

There was here visible a slight vibration of the head, rather gentle at the beginning, but clearly prophetic of ultimate energy, and an unequivocal determination to enforce whatever she might say with suitable action, even in its widest sense.

"An' pray, ma'am," said the other; for however

paradoxical it may appear, it is an established case that in all such displays between women, politeness usually keeps pace with scurrility; "an' pray, ma'am," replied Kitty, "is it to the likes o' you we're to say our catechis?"

Biddy was resolved not to be outdone in politeness, and replied,

"Af you plase, ma'am," with a courtesy.

"Lord project us! what will we hear next I wondher! Well, ma'am?" Here her antagonist stood evidently waiting for the onset.

"You'll hear more than'll go down your back pleasant afore I've done wid you, ma'am."

"Don't be makin' us long for it in the mane time, Miss Biddy."

"You didn't answer my question, *Miss* Kitty. Why did you refuse to let me in to-night?"

"For good raisons; bekase I hard you collogin' an' whisperin' wid a pack o' fellows 'ithout."

"An' have you the brass to say so, knowin' that it's false, an' a lie into the bargain?" (Head energetically shaken.)

"Have I the brass, is it? I keep my brass in my pocket, ma'am, not in my face, like some of our friends." (Head shaken in reply to the action displayed by Kitty.)

This was a sharp retort; but it was very well returned.

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Biddy; "if it's faces you're spakin' about, I know you're able to outface me any day; but whatever's in my face, there's no desate in my heart, Miss Lowry. Put that in your pocket." (One triumphant shake of the head at the conclusion.)

"There's as much in your heart as 'ill shame your face yet, Miss Nulty. Put that in yours." (Another triumphant shake of the head in return.)

"Thank God," retorted Biddy, "none o' *my* friends

ever knewn what ashamed face is. I say, madam, none o' *my* family iver wore a shamed face. *Thigun thu shin?*" (Do you understand that?)

This, indeed, was a bitter hit; for the reader must know that a sister of Lowry's had not passed through the world without the breath of slander tarnishing her fair fame.

"Oh, it's well known your tongue's no scandal, Biddy."

"Thin that's more than can be sed o' yours, Kitty."

"If my shisteer met wid a misfortune, it was many a betther woman's case than ever you'll be. Don't shout till you get out o' the wood, ma'am. You dunna what's afore yourself. Any how, it's not by lettin' fellows into the masther's kitchen whin the family's in bed, an' dhrinkin'-whiskey wid them, that'll get through the world wid your character safe. * * * An' you're nothin' but a barge, or you'd not dhraw down my shisther's name that never did you an ill turn, whatever she did to herself, poor girl!"

"An' do you dar' for to call me a barge? * * Blast your insurance! be this an' be that for a farden I'd malivogue the devil out o' you."

"We're not puttin' it past you, madam; you're blaggard enough to fight like a man; but we're not goin' to make a blaggard an' a bully of ourselves, in the mane time."

The conversation of which we are giving a very imperfect report, was garnished by both ladies with sundry vituperative epithets, which it would be inconsistent with the dignity of our history to record.

"That's bekase you haven't the blood of a hen in you. * * Sure we know what you are! But howld! be me sowl, you're *doin'* me for all that. Ah, ha! I see where you're ladin' me; but it won't do, Miss Kitty Lowry. I'll bring you back to the catechis agin. You'd light the sthraw to get away in the smoke; but you're worth two gone people yet, dhough."

"Worth half a dozen o' you, any day."

"Well, as we're both to the fore, we'll soon see that. How did you know, my lady, that the masther's hall door *was* left open to night? Answer me that, on the nail!"

This was what might be very properly called a knock-down blow; for if the reader but reflects a moment he will see that Kitty, on taxing her antagonist, after her rescue, with leaving it open, directly betrayed herself, as there was and could have been no one in the house cognizant of the fact at the time, unless the guilty person. With this latter exception, Dandy Duffy was the only individual aware of it, and from whom the knowledge of it could come. Kitty, therefore, by her over anxiety to exculpate herself from a charge which had not been made, became the unconscious instrument of disclosing the fact of her having betrayed trust.

This trying query, coming upon her unexpectedly as it did, threw her into palpable confusion. Her face became at once suffused with a deep scarlet hue, occasioned by mingled shame and resentment, as was quite evident from the malignant and fiery glare which she turned upon her querist.

"Get out," she replied; "do you think I'd think it worth my while to answer the likes o' you? I'd see you farder than I could look first. You, indeed! faugh! musha bad luck to your impidence!"

"Oh, i' you plaise, ma'am," said Biddy, dropping a courtesy, that might be well termed the very pink of politeness; "we hope you'll show yourself a betther Christhin than to be ignorant o' your catechis. So, ma'am, if it 'ud be plasin' to you afore the company, maybe you'd answer it."

"Who made you my misthress, you blaggard flipe? who gave you authority to ax me sich questins?" replied the other. "A fellow-sarvant like myself! to the divil I pitch you. You, indeed! Faix, it's well come up wid the likes o' you to ballyrag over me!"

"Well, but, ma'am dear, will you answer—that is, i' you plase, for sure we can't forget our manners, you know—will you jist answer what I axed you? Oh, be me sowl, your face condimns you, my lady," said Biddy, abruptly changing her tone; "it does, you yolla mulotty, it does. You bethrayed the masther's house, an' Miss Oona too, you villin o' blazes. If you could see your face now—your guilty face."

The spirit of her antagonist, being that of a woman, could bear no more. The last words were scarcely uttered, when Lowry made a spring like a tigress at her opponent, who, however, received this onset with a skill and intrepidity worthy of Penthesilea herself. They were immediately separated, but not until they had twisted and twined about one another two or three times, after which, each displayed, by way of trophy, a copious handful of hair that had changed proprietorship during their brief but energetic conflict. In addition to this, there were visible on Kitty's face five small streams of liquid gore, which, no doubt, would have been fond to correspond with the red expanded talons of her antagonist.

John O'Brien then put the question seriously to Lowry, who, now that her blood was up, or probably feeling that she had betrayed herself, declined to answer at all.

"I'll answer nottin' I don't like," she replied; "an' I'll not be ballyragged by any one; not even by you, Misther John; an' what's more, I'll lave the sarvice at the skriek o' day to-morrow. I wouldn't live in the house wid that one; my life 'udn't be safe undher the wan roof wid her."

"Thin you'll get no correcther from any one here," said Mrs. O'Brien; "for indeed any way, there was never a minute's pace in the kitching since you came into it."

"Divil cares," she replied, with a toss of her head;

"if I don't, I must only live without it, and will, I hope."

She then flounced out of the room, and kept grumbling in an insolent tone of voice, until she got to her bed. Dandy Duffy then detailed all the circumstances he had beheld, by which it appeared unquestionable that Kitty Lowry had been aware of Flanagan's design, and was consequently one of his accomplices. This in one sense was true, while in another and the worst they did her injustice. It is true that Bartle Flanagan pretended affection for her, and contrived, on many occasions within the preceding five months, that several secret meetings should take place between them, and almost always upon a Sunday, which was the only day she had any opportunity of seeing him. He had no notion, however, of intrusting her with his secret. In fact, no man could possibly lay his plans with deeper design or more ingenious precaution for his own safety, than Flanagan. Having gained a promise from the credulous girl to elope with him on the night in question, he easily induced her to leave the hall door open. His exploit, however, having turned out so different in its issue from that which Kitty expected, she felt both chagrined and confounded, and knew not at first whether to ascribe the abduction of Biddy Nulty to mistake or design; for, indeed, she was not ignorant of Flanagan's treacherous conduct to the sex; no female having ever repulsed him, whose character he did not injure whenever he could do so with safety. Biddy's return, however, satisfied her that Bartle must have made a blunder of some kind, or he would not have taken away her fellow-servant instead of herself; and it was the bitterness which weak minds always feel when their own wishes happen to be disappointed, that prompted her resentment against poor Biddy, who was unconsciously its object. Flanagan's primary intention was still, however, in some degree effected, so far as regarded the

abduction. The short space of an hour gave him time to cool and collect himself sufficiently to form the best mode of action under the circumstances. He resolved, therefore, to plead mistake, and to produce Kitty Lowry to prove that his visit that night to the Bodagh's house was merely to fulfil their mutual promise of eloping together.

But there was the robbery staring him in the face; and how was he to manage that? This, indeed, was the point on which the accomplished villain felt, by the sinking of his heart, that he had overshot his mark. When he looked closely into it, his whole frame became cold and feeble from despair, the hard paleness of mental suffering settled upon his face, and his brain was stunned by a stupor which almost destroyed the power of thinking.

All this, however, availed him not. Before twelve o'clock the next day informations had been sworn against him, and at the hour of three he found himself in the very room which had been assigned to Connor O'Donovan, sinking under a double charge of abduction and robbery.

And now once more did the mutability of public feeling and opinion become apparent. No sooner had fame spread abroad the report of Flanagan's twofold crime, and his imprisonment, than those very people who had only a day or two before inferred that Connor O'Donovan was guilty, because his accuser's conduct continued correct and blameless, now changed their tone, and insisted that the hand of God was visible in Flanagan's punishment. Again were all the dark traits of his character dragged forward and exposed; and this man reminded that man, as that man did some other man, that he had said more than once that Bartle Flanagan would be hanged for swearing away an innocent young man's life. Such, however, without reference to truth or justice, is public opinion among the great body of the people, who are swayed by their feelings only instead of

their judgment. The lower public will, as a matter of course, feel at random upon everything, and, like a fortune-teller, it will for that reason, and for that only, sometimes be found on the right side. From the time which elapsed between the period of Bartle's imprisonment and that of his trial, many strange circumstances occurred in connexion with it, of which the public at large were completely ignorant. Bartle was now at the mercy of a man who was looked upon with a spirit of detestation and vengeance by those illegal confederacies with which he had uniformly declined to associate himself. Flanagan's party, therefore, had now only two methods of serving him, one was intimidation, and the other a general subscription among the various lodges of the district, to raise funds for his defence. To both of these means they were resolved to have recourse.

Many private meetings they held among themselves upon these important matters, at which Dandy Duffy and Ned M'Cormick attended, as was their duty; and well was it for them that the part they took in defeating Bartle Flanagan, and serving the Bodagh and his family, was unknown to their confederates. To detail the proceeding of their meetings, and recount the savage and vindictive ferocity of such men, would be paying the taste and humanity of our readers a bad compliment. It is enough to say that a fund was raised for Flanagan's defence, and a threatening notice written to be posted on the Bodagh Buie's door, of which elegant production the following is a literal copy:

"Buddha Bee—You 'ave wan iv our boys *in*—for abjection an' rubbry—an' it seems is resolved to parsequte the poor boy at the nuxt 'Shizers—now dhis is be way av a dalikit hint to yew an' yoors that af butt wan spudh av his blud is spiled in quensequence av yewr parsequtn im as the winthers' comin' on an' the wether gettin cowld an' the long knights settin' in yew may as

well prepare yewr coughin an' not that same remimber you've a praty dother an' may no more about her afore your much oulder.

"SIMON PETER STARLIGHT."

This and several others of the same class were served upon the Bodagh, with the intention of intimidating him from the prosecution of Flanagan. They had, however, quite mistaken their man. The Bodagh, though peaceable and placable, had not one atom of the coward in his whole composition. On the contrary, he was not only resolute in resisting what he conceived to be oppressive or unjust, but he was also immoveably obstinate in anything wherein he fancied he had right on his side. And even had his disposition been inclined to timidity or pliancy, his son John would have used all his influence to induce him to resist a system which is equally opposed to the laws of God and of man, as well as to the temporal happiness of those who are slaves to the terrible power which, like a familiar devil, it exercises over its victims, under the hollow promise of protection.

As the Bodagh and his son took the usual legal steps to forward the prosecution, it was but natural that they should calculate upon the evidence of Dandy Duffy, Ned M'Cormick, and Alick Nulty. John O'Brien accordingly informed them, on the very night of the outrage, that his father and himself would consider them as strong evidences against Bartle Flanagan, and call upon them as such. This information placed these young men in a position of incredible difficulty and danger. They knew not exactly at that moment how to proceed, consistently with the duty which they owed to society at large, and that which was expected from them by the dark combination to which they were united. M'Cormick, however, begged of John O'Brien not to mention their names until the day after the

next, and told him that if he could understand their reason for this request, he would not hesitate to comply with it.

O'Brien, who suspected the true cause of their reluctance, did not on this occasion press them farther, but consented to their wishes, and promised not to mention their names as even indirectly connected with the outrage, until the time they had specified had elapsed.

In the course of the following day Nogher M'Cormick presented himself to the Bodagh and his son, neither of whom felt much difficulty in divining the cause of his visit.

"Well," said Nogher, after the first usual civilities had passed, "glory be to God, gintlemen, this is desperate fine weather for the season; barrin' the wet."

John smiled, but the plain matter-of-fact Bodagh replied,

"Why, how the devil can you call this good weather, neighbour, when it's raining for the last week, night and day!"

"I do call it good weather for all that," returned Nogher, "for you ought to know that every weather is good that God sends."

"Well," said the Bodagh, taken aback a little by Nogher's piety, "there's truth in that too. You are right, neighbour."

"I *am* right," said Nogher, "an' it's nothin' else than a sinful world to say that this is bad weather, or that that's bad weather; bekase, as the Scripthur says, 'vo be to the man that's—'"

"But pray," interrupted John, "what's your business with my father and me?"

Nogher rubbed down his chin very gravely and significantly.

"Why," said he, "somethin' for your own good, gintlemin."

"Well, what is that?" said John, anxious to bring him to the point as soon as possible.

"The truth, gintlemin, is this; I am an ould man, an' hope that I never was found to be anything else than an honest one. They're far away this day that could give me a good carrecthur; two o' them, any how, I'll never forget; Connor an' his mother; but I'll never see them agin; an' the ould man too, I never could hate him, in regard of the love he bore his son. Long, long was the journey he tuck to see that son, an', as he tould me the day he wint into the ship, to die in his boy's arms; for he said Heaven wouldn't be Heaven to him if he died any where else."

Nogher's eyes filled as he spoke, and we need scarcely say that neither the Bodagh nor his son esteemed him the less for his attachment to Connor O'Donovan and his family.

"The sooner I end the business I came about to-day," said he, "the betther. You want my son Ned, Dandy Duffy, an' Alick Nulty, to join in giving evidence aginst blaggard Bartle Flanagan. Now, the truth is, gintlemen, you don't know the state of things in the country. If they come into a coort o' justice aginst him, their lives won't be worth a traneen. It's aginst their oath, I'm tould, as Ribandmen, to prosecute one another; and from hints I resaved, I'm afeard they can't do it, as I said, barrin' at the risk o' their lives."

"Father," said John "as far as I've heard, he speaks nothing but truth."

"I believe he does too," rejoined the Bodagh, "an' by my sowl, I'll be bound he's an honest man; upon my credit I think you are, M'Cormick."

"I am thankful to you, sir," said Nogher.

"I'm inclined to think farther," said John, "that we have proof enough against Flanagan without them."

"Thin if you think so, John, God forbid that we'd be the manes of bringin' the young men into throuble.

All I'm sorry for is, that they allowed themselves to be hooked into sich a dark and murdherin' piece of villany."

"I know, sir, it's a bad business," said Nogher, "but it can't be helped now; no man's safe that won't join it."

"Faith and I won't, for one," replied the Bodagh, "not but they sent many a threat to me. Anything aginst the laws o' the counthry is bad, and never ends but in harm to them that's consarned in it."

"God forbid," farther observed his son, "that ever the day should come when the government of the country will shamefully and basely truckle to those agitating politicians, who, spiritual or otherwise, keep alive such murderous combinations for their own personal purposes. That day will be an unhappy day to the loyal Catholic and the loyal Protestant, who may wish to rest contented under those laws which are adequate to their protection, if firmly and impartially administered. M'Cormick," added the son, "villain as Flanagan is, we shall let him once more loose upon society, sooner than bring the lives of your son and the two other young men into jeopardy. Such, unhappily, is the state of the country, and we must submit to it."

"I thank you, sir," said Nogher. "The truth is, they're sworn, it seems, *not* to prosecute one another, let whatever may happen; an' any one of them that breaks *that* oath—God knows I wish they'd think of *other* oaths as much as they do of it—barrin' a stag that's taken up, an' kep' safe by the government, is sure to get his wages well ped."

"Say no more, M'Cormick," said the Bodagh's inestimable son, "say no more. No matter how this may terminate, we shall not call on them as evidences. It must be so, father," he added, "and God help the country in which the law is a dead letter, and the passions and bigoted prejudices of disaffected or seditious men, the active principles which impress their vindictive hor-

rors upon society. Although not myself connected with these men, I know their oath, and—but I say no more. M'Cormick, your friends are safe; we shall not, as I told you, call upon them, be the result what it may; better that one guilty should escape, than that three innocent persons should suffer."

Nogher again thanked him, and having taken up his hat, was about to retire, when he paused a moment, and, after some consideration with himself, said, addressing the son,

"You're a scholar, sir, an'—but maybe I'm sayin' what I oughtn't to say—but sure, God knows, it's all very well known long ago."

"What is it, M'Cormick?" asked John; "speak out plainly; we will not feel offended."

"'Twas only this, sir," continued Nogher, "I'm an unlarned man; but *he* would write to *you*, maybe—I mane Connor—an' if he did, I'd be glad to hear—but I hope I don't offind you, sir. You wouldn't think of me, maybe, although many and many's the time I nursed him on these knees, an' carried him about in these arms, and he cried—ay, as God is my judge, he cried bittherly—when, as he said, at the time—'Nogher, Nogher, my affectionate friend, I'll never see you more.'"

John O'Brien shook him cordially by the hand, and replied, "I will make it a point to let you know anything that our family may hear from him."

"An' if you write to him, sir, just in a single line—to say that the affectionate ould friend never forgot him."

"That, too, shall be done," replied John; "you may rest assured of it."

The Bodagh, whose notions in matters of delicacy and feeling were rough but honest, now rang the bell with an uncommon, nay, an angry degree of violence.

"Get up some spirits here, an' don't be asleep. You

must take a glass of whiskey before you go," he said, addressing Nogher.

"Sir," replied Nogher, "I'm in a hurry home, for I'm *off* o' my day's work."

"By the hand of my body but you must," rejoined the Bodagh; "and what's your day's wages?"

"Tenpence."

"There's half a crown; an' I tell you more, you must come and take a *cot-tack* undher me, and you'll find the change for the betther, never fear."

In point of fact, it was so concluded, and Nogher left the Bodagh's house with a heart thankful to Providence that he had ever entered it.

CHAPTER IX.

THE day of Flanagan's trial, however, now approached, and our readers are fully aware of the many chances of escaping justice which the existence of Ribandism in the country opened to him, notwithstanding his villany. As some one, however, says in a play—in that of Othello, we believe—"God is above all," so might Flanagan have said on this occasion. The evidence of Biddy Nulty, of some of the other servants, and of the Bodagh, who identified several of the bank notes, was quite sufficient against him, with respect to the robbery. Nor was any evidence adduced of more circumstantial weight than Kitty Lowry's, who, on being satisfied of Flanagan's designs against Una, and that she herself was consequently no more than his dupe, openly acknowledged the part she had taken in the occurrences of the night on which the outrages were committed. This confession agreed so well with Bartle's character for caution and skill in everything he undertook, that his object in persuading her to leave the hall door open was not only clear, but perfectly consistent with the other parts of his plan. His crime was a capital one; and when fame once more had proclaimed abroad that Bartle Flanagan was condemned to be hanged for robbing Bodagh Buie, they insisted still more strongly that the sentence was an undeniable instance of retributive justice.

Striking indeed was the difference between his deportment during the trial, and the manly fortitude of Connor O'Donovan, when standing under as heavy a charge at the same bar. The moment he entered the

dock, it was observed that his face expressed all the pusillanimous symptoms of the most unmanly terror. His brows fell, or rather hung over his eyes, as if all their muscular power had been lost, giving to his countenance not only the vague sullenness of irresolute ferocity, but also, as was legible in his dead small eye, the cold calculations of deep and cautious treachery; nor was his white haggard cheek a less equivocal assurance of his consummate cowardice. Many eyes were now turned upon him; for we need scarcely say that his part in a case, which created so much romantic interest as the conviction of Connor O'Donovan, and the history it developed of the mutual affection which subsisted between him and Una, was by no means forgotten. And even if it had, his present appearance and position would, by the force of ordinary association, have revived it in the minds of many then present.

Deprived of all moral firmness, as he appeared to be, on entering the dock, yet as the trial advanced, it was evident that his heart and spirits were sinking still more and more, until at length his face, in consequence of its ghastliness, and the involuntary hanging of his eyebrows, indicated scarcely any other expression than that of utter helplessness, or the feeble agony of a mind so miserably prostrated, as to be hardly conscious of the circumstances around him. This was clearly obvious when the verdict of "guilty" was uttered in the dead silence which prevailed through the court. No sooner were the words pronounced than he looked about him wildly, and exclaimed,

"What's that? what's that? Oh, God!—sweet Jasus!—sweet Jasus!"

His lips then moved for a little, and he was observed to mark his breast privately with the sign of the cross; but in such a manner as to prove that the act was dictated by the unsettled incoherency of terror, and not by the promptings of piety or religion.

The judge now put on the black cap, and was about

pronounce the fatal sentence, when the prisoner shrieked out, "Oh, my Lord, my Lord, spare me. Oh, spare me, for I'm not fit to die. I daren't meet God."

"Alas!" exclaimed the judge, "unhappy man, it is too often true, that those who are least prepared to meet their Almighty Judge, are also the most reckless in the perpetration of those crimes which are certain, ere long, to hurry them into his presence. You find now, that whether as regards this life or the next, he who observes the laws of his religion and his country, is the only man who can be considered, in the true sense of the word, his own friend; and there is this advantage in his conduct, that while he is the best friend to himself, it *necessarily* follows that he must be a benefactor in the same degree to society at large. To such a man the laws are a security, and not, as in your case, and in that of those who resemble you, a punishment. It is the wicked only who hate the laws, because they are conscious of having provoked their justice. In asking me to spare your life, you are aware that you ask me for that which I cannot grant. There is nothing at all in your case to entitle you to mercy; and if, by the life you have led, you feel that you are unfit to die, it is clear, upon your own principles, and by the use you have made of life, that you are unfit to live."

He then proceeded to exhort him in the usual terms, to sue for reconciliation with an offended God, through the merits and sufferings of Christ. After which he sentenced him to be executed on the fifth day after the close of the assizes. On hearing the last words of the judge, he clutched the dock at which he stood with a convulsive effort; his hands and arms, however, became the next moment relaxed, and he sank down in a state of helpless insensibility. On reviving he found himself in his cell, attended by two of the turnkeys, who felt now more alarmed at his screams and the horror which was painted on his face, than by the fainting fit from which he had just recovered. It is not our de-

sign to dwell at much length upon the last minutes of such a man; but we will state briefly, that, as might be expected, he left nothing unattempted to save his own life. On the day after his trial, he sent for the sheriff, and told him, that provided life were granted him by the government, he could make many important disclosures, and give very valuable information concerning the state and prospects of Ribandism in the country, together with a long list of the persons who were attached to it in that parish. The sheriff told him that his information, which might, under other circumstances, have been deemed of much value by the government, had already been anticipated by another man, during the very short period that elapsed since his conviction. There was nothing which he could now disclose, the sheriff added, that he himself was not already in possession of, even to the rank which he, Flanagan, was invested with among them, and the very place where he and they had held their last meeting. But, independently of that, he proceeded, it is not usual for government to pardon the principals in any such outrage as that for which you have been convicted. I shall, however, transmit your proposal to the chief secretary, who may act in the matter as he thinks proper.

In the mean time his relatives and confederates were not idle outside, each party having already transmitted a petition to Dublin Castle in his behalf. That of his relations contained only the usual melancholy sentiments, and earnest entreaties for mercy which are to be found in such documents. The memorial, however, of his confederates was equally remarkable for its perverted ingenuity, and those unlucky falsehoods which are generally certain to defeat the objects of those who have recourse to them.

It went to say, "That petitioners feared very much that the country was in a dangerous state in consequence of the progressive march of Ribandism in part of that parish, and in many of the surrounding districts.

That the unhappy prisoner had for some time past made himself peculiarly obnoxious to this illegal class of persons; and that he was known in the country as what is termed '*a marked man*,' ever since he had the courage to prosecute, some time ago, one of their most notorious leaders, by name Connor O'Donovan, of Lisnamona; who was, at the period of writing that memorial, a convict during life in New South Wales for a capital White-boy offence.

"That said Connor O'Donovan having seduced the affections of a young woman named Una O'Brien, daughter of a man called Michael O'Brien, otherwise Bodagh Buie, or the Yellow Churl, demanded her in marriage from her father and family, who unanimously rejected his pretensions. Upon which, instigated by the example and practice of the dark combination of which he was so distinguished a leader, he persuaded memorialist, partly by entreaties, but principally by awful and mysterious threats, to join him in the commission of this most atrocious crime. That from the moment he had been forced into the participation of such an act, his conscience could not permit him to rest night or day; and he consequently came forward boldly and fearlessly, and did what he considered his duty to God and his country.

"That in consequence of this conscientious act, O'Donovan, the Riband ringleader, was capitally convicted; but, through the interest of some leading gentlemen of the parish, who were ignorant of his habits and connections, the sentence was, by the mercy of government, commuted to transportation for life.

"That upon his banishment from the country, the girl, whose affections he had seduced, became deranged for some time; but after her recovery, expressed, on many occasions, the most bitter determination to revenge upon petitioner the banishment of her lover; and that the principal evidence upon which petitioner

was convicted, was hers* and that of a girl named Bridget Nulty, formerly a servant in his father's house, and known to have been O'Donovan's paramour.

"That this girl, Bridget Nulty, was taken into O'Brien's family at the suggestion of his daughter Una, who was ignorant of her guilt; and that she and Bridget Nulty, aided by another female servant of O'Brien's, named Kitty Lowry, formed the conspiracy of which petitioner is unhappily the victim."

It then proceeded to detail how the conspiracy which Una O'Brien and the two females she had taken in as accomplices, was carried into effect; all of which was done with singular tact and ingenuity; every circumstance being made to bear a character and design diametrically opposed to the truth. It concluded by stating "that great exultation had been manifested by the Ribandmen of that parish, who, on the night of petitioner's conviction, lighted bonfires in several parts of the neighbourhood, fired shots, sounded horns, and displayed other symptoms of great rejoicing; and hoped his excellency would, therefore, interpose his high prerogative, and prevent petitioner from falling a sacrifice to a conspiracy on the one hand, and the resentment of a traitorous confederacy on the other; and all this only for having conscientiously and firmly served the government of the country."

Our readers need not be surprised at the ingenuity of this plausible petition, for the truth is, that before government supported any system of education at all in Ireland, the old hedge schoolmasters were, almost to a man, office-bearers and leaders in this detestable system. Such men, and those also who were designed for the priesthood, with here and there an occasional

* This was a falsehood, inasmuch as Una, having been concealed in another room, could give and did give no evidence that any way affected his life.

poor scholar, were uniformly the petition writers, and, indeed, the general scribes of the little world in which they lived. In fact, we have abundance of public evidence to satisfy us, that persons of considerable literary attainments have been connected with Ribandism in all its stages.

This fine writing, however, was unfortunately counteracted, in consequence of the information already laid before the sheriff by no less a personage than Rousin Redhead, who, fearing alike the treachery and enmity of his leader, resolved thus to neutralize any disclosures Flanagan should happen to make. But lest this might not have been sufficient to exhibit the character of that document, the proposal of Bartle himself to make disclosures was transmitted to the secretary of state by the same post; so that both the conflicting statements reached that gentleman, *pari passu*, to his no small astonishment.

Had Flanagan's confederates consulted him, he would of course have dissuaded them from sending any petition at all, or, at least, only such as he could approve of; but such is the hollowness of this bond, and so little confidence is placed in its obligation, that when any of its victims happens to find himself in a predicament similar to Flanagan's, his companions without lead such a life of terror, and suspicion, and doubt, as it would be difficult to describe. But when, as in Bartle's case, there exists a strong distrust in his firmness and honesty, scarcely one can be found hardy enough to hold any communication with him. This easily and truly accounts for the fact of their having got this petition written and sent to government in his name. The consequence was, that his own communication gave the lie to theirs, and on the day previous to that named for his execution, his death-warrant reached the sheriff, who lost no time in apprizing him of his unhappy fate.

This was a trying task to that humane and amiable

gentleman, who had already heard of the unutterable tortures which the criminal suffered from the horror of approaching death, and the dread of eternity; for neither by penitence nor even remorse, was he in the slightest degree moved.

"To die!" said he, staggering back; "to be in etarnity to-morrow; to have to face God before twelve o'clock! tarrible! tarrible! tarrible! Can no one save me? To die to-morrow! tarrible! tarrible! Oh that I could sink into the earth! that the ground 'ud swally me!"

The sheriff advised him to be a man, and told him to turn to God, who, if he repented, would in nowise cast him out. "Act," said he, "as O'Donovan did, whom you yourself prosecuted, and placed in the very cell in which you now stand."

"Connor O'Donovan," he exclaimed, "*he* might well bear to die; *he* was innocent; *it was I that burned Bodagh Buie's haggard;* he had neither act nor part in it no more than the child unborn. I swore away his life out of revinge to his father, an' jealousy of himself about Una O'Brien. Oh, if I had as little to answer for now as he, I could die—die! Sweet Jasus, an' must I die to-morrow; be in the flames of hell afore twelve o'clock! tarrible! tarrible!"

It was absolutely, to use his own word, "terrible" to witness the almost superhuman energy of his weakness. On making this last disclosure to the sheriff, the latter stepped back from a feeling of involuntary surprise and aversion, exclaiming, as he did it,

"Oh God forgive you, unhappy and guilty man; you have much, indeed, to answer for; and, as I said before, I advise you to make the most of the short time that is allotted to you, in repenting and seeking pardon from God."

The culprit heard him not, however, for his whole soul was fearfully absorbed in the contemplation of eternity, and punishment, and death.

"Sir," said the turnkey, "that's the way he's runnin' about the room almost since his thrial; not, to be sure, altogether so bad as now, but clappin' his hands, an' screamin', an groanin', that it's frightful to listen to him. An' his dhrames, sir, is worse. God, sir, if you'd hear him asleep, the hair would stand on your head; indeed, one of us is ordered to be still with him."

"It is right," replied the sheriff, who, after recommending him to get a clergyman, left him, and with his usual promptness and decision, immediately wrote to the secretary of state, acquainting him with Flanagan's confession of his own guilt, and Connor O'Donovan's innocence of the burning of O'Brien's haggard; hoping, at the same time, that government would take instant steps to restore O'Donovan to his country and his friends.

Soon after the sheriff left him, a Roman Catholic clergyman arrived, for it appeared that against the priest, who was champlain to the jail, he had taken an insurmountable prejudice, in consequence of some fancied resemblance he supposed him to bear to the miser's son. The former gentleman spent that night with him, and after a vast deal of exertion and difficulty, got him so far composed, as that he attempted to confess to him, which, however, he did only in a hurried and distracted manner.

But how shall we describe the scene, and we have it from more than one or two witnesses, which presented itself when the hour of his execution drew nigh. His cries and shriekings were distinctly heard for a considerable distance among the dense multitudes which were assembled to witness his death; thus giving to that dreadful event a character of horror so deep and gloomy, that many persons, finding themselves unable to bear it, withdrew from the crowd, and actually fainted on hearing the almost supernatural tones of his yells and howlings within.

In the mean time, the proceedings in the pressroom

were of a still more terrific description. He now resembled the stag at bay; his strength became more than human. On attempting to tie his hands, five men were found insufficient for the woful task. He yelled, and flung them aside like children, but made no attempt to escape, for, in truth, he knew not what he did. The sheriff, one of the most powerful and athletic men to be found in a province, was turned about and bent like an osier in his hands. His words, when the fury of despair permitted his wild and broken cries to become intelligible, were now for life—only life upon any terms; and again did he howl out his horror of death, hell, and judgment. Never was such a scene perhaps witnessed.

At length his hands were tied, and they attempted to get him up to the platform of death; but, to their amazement, he was once more loose, and flying to the priest, he clasped him with the grip of Hercules.

"Save me, save me," he shouted. "Let me live. I can't die. You're puttin' me into hell's fire. How can I face God? Ho, it's tarrible, it's tarrible, it's damnable! Life, life, life—only life, oh, only life!"

As he spoke he strained the reverend gentleman to his breast and kissed him, and shouted with a wildness of entreaty which far transcended in terror the most outrageous paroxysms of insanity.

"I will not lave the priest," shrieked he; "so long as I stay with him I'll be so long out of the punishments of etarnity—out of hell's fire! I will stick to you. Don't—don't put me away, but have pity on me. No, I'll not go, I'll not go."

Again he kissed the priest's lips, cheeks, and forehead, and still clung to him with fearful violence, until at last his hands were finally secured beyond the possibility of his again getting them loose. He then threw himself upon the ground, and still resisted, with a degree of muscular strength altogether unaccountable in a person even of his compact and rather athletic form.

His appearance upon the platform will long be remembered by those who had the questionable gratification of witnessing it. It was the struggle of strong men dragging a strong man to the most frightful of all precipices —Death. When he was seen by the people in the act of being forced with such violence to the drop, they all moved, like a forest agitated by a sudden breeze, and uttered that strange murmur, composed of many passions, which can only be heard where a large number of persons are congregated together under the power of something that is deep and thrilling in its interest. At length, after a struggle for life, and a horror of death possibly unprecedented in the annals of crime, he was pushed upon the drop, the spring was touched, and the unhappy man passed shrieking into that eternity which he dreaded so much. His death was instantaneous; and after hanging the usual time, his body was removed to the jail; the crowd began to disperse, and in half an hour the streets and people presented nothing more than their ordinary aspect of indifference to everything but their own affairs.*

Such and so slight, after all, is the impression which death makes upon life, when the heart and domestic affections are not concerned.

* We have only to say that W—m C—k, Esq., of L—sb—e, sheriff of the county of D—n, and those who officially attended, about four years ago, the execution of a man named M—y, at the jail of D—np—k, for a most heinous murder, will, should they happen to see this description, not hesitate to declare that it falls far, far short of what they themselves witnessed upon this "terrible" occasion. There is *nothing* mentioned *here* which did not *then occur*, but there is much omitted.

CHAPTER X.

And now, gentle and patient reader—for well, indeed, has thy patience been tried during the progress of this tantalizing narrative—we beg to assure thee, that unless thou art so exquisitely tender-hearted as to mourn over the fate of Bartle Flanagan, the shadows which darkened the morning and noon of our story have departed, and its eve will dewy, be and calm, and effulgent.

Flanagan's execution, like any other just and necessary vindication of the laws, was not without its usual good effect upon the great body of the people; for although we are not advocates for a sanguinary statute-book, neither are we the eulogists of those who, with sufficient power in their hands, sit calmly and serenely amid scenes of outrage and crime, in which the innocent suffer by the impunity of the guilty. Fame, who is busy on such occasions, soon published to a far distance Flanagan's confession of having committed the crime for which O'Donovan was punished. John O'Brien had it himself from the sheriff's lips, as well as from a still more authentic statement written by the priest who attended him, and signed by the unhappy culprit's hand, in the presence of that gentleman, the governor of the jail, and two turnkeys. The sheriff now heard from O'Brien, for the first time, that O'Donovan's parents, having disposed of all their property, followed him to New South Wales, a circumstance by which he was so much struck at the moment, that he observed to O'Brien,

"Do you not think it the duty of government, considering all the young man and his parents have suffered by that rascal's malice, to bring the whole family back at its own expense? For my part, aware as I am of the excellent disposition of the chief secretary, I think if we ask them it will be done."

"Our best plan, perhaps," replied John, "is to get a memorial to that effect signed by those who subscribed to the former one in his behalf. I think it is certainly necessary, for, to tell you the truth, I doubt whether they are in possession of funds sufficient for the expenses of so long a journey."

"I know," said the sheriff, "that there is little time to be lost, for S——," naming the governor of the jail, "tells me that the next convict ship sails in a fortnight. We must, therefore, push forward the business as rapidly as we can."

Well and truly did they keep their words, for we have the satisfaction of adding, that on the seventh day from the date of that conversation, they received a communication from the castle, informing them that, after having taken the peculiar hardships of O'Donovan's singular case into mature consideration, they deemed the prayer of the memorial such as they felt pleasure in complying with; and that the colonial secretary had been written to, to take the proper steps for the return of the young man and his parents to their own country at the expense of government.

This was enough, and almost more than O'Brien expected. He had now done as much as could be done for the present, and nothing remained but to await their arrival with hope and patience. In truth, the prospect that now presented itself to the Bodagh's family was one in which, for the sake of the beloved Una, they felt a deep and overwhelming interest. Ever since Connor's removal from the country her spirits had become gradually more and more depressed. All her

mirth and gayety had abandoned her; she disrelished reading; she avoided company; she hardly ever laughed, but, on the contrary, indulged in long fits of bitter grief, while upon her solitary rambles. Her chief companion was Biddy Nulty, whom she exempted from her usual employment whenever she wished that Connor should be the topic of their conversation. Many a time have they strolled together through the garden, where Una has often stood, and, pointing to the summer-house, where the acknowledgments of their affection were first exchanged, said to her humble companion,

"Biddy, that is the spot where he first told me that he loved me, and where I first acknowledged my love to him."

She would then pull out from her heart the locket which contained his rich brown hair, and after kissing it, sit and weep on the spot which was so dear to her.

Biddy's task was to recount to the unhappy girl such anecdotes as she remembered of him; and as these were all to his advantage, we need scarcely say that many an entertainment of this kind she was called upon to furnish to her whose melancholy enjoyment was now only the remembrance of him, and of what he had once been to her.

"I would have been in a convent long before now, Biddy," said she, a few days before Flanagan's trial, "but I will not leave my father and mother, because I know they could not live without me. My brother John has declined Maynooth, lest I should feel melancholy for want of some person to amuse me and to cheer me; and now I feel that it would be an ungrateful return I should make if I entered a convent, and left my parents without a daughter whom they love so well, and my brother without a sister on whom he dotes."

"Well, miss," replied Biddy, "don't be cast down;

for my part I'd always hope the best. Who knows, miss, but a betther lafe may be turned up yet. I'd hould a naggin that God niver intinded an innocent creature like you to spind the rest of your life in sadness and sorrow, as you're doin'. Always hope for the best."

"Ah, Biddy," she replied, "you don't know what you speak of. *His* sentence is one that can never be changed; and as for hoping for the best, how can I do that, Biddy, when I know that I have no 'best' to hope for? He was my *best* in this world; but he is gone. Now go in, Biddy, and leave me to myself for a little. You know how I love to be alone."

"May God in heaven pity you, Miss Oona," exclaimed the poor girl, while the tears gushed from her eyes, "as I do this day! Oh, keep up your heart, miss, darlin'; for while there's life there's hope."

Little did she then dream, however, that hope would be so soon restored to her heart, or that the revolution of another year should see her waiting with trembling delight for the fulness of her happiness.

On the evening previous to Bartle Flanagan's execution, she was pouring out tea for her father and mother, as was usual, when her brothor John came home on his return from the assizes. Although the smile of affection with which she always received him lighted up her dark glossy eyes, yet he observed that she appeared unusually depressed, and much more pale than she had been for some time past.

"Una, are you unwell, dear?" he asked, as she handed him a cup of tea.

She looked at him with a kind of affectionate reproof in her eyes, as if she wondered that he should be ignorant of the sorrow which preyed upon her.

"Not in health, John," she replied; "but that man's trial, and the many remembrances it has stirred up in my mind, have disturbed me. I am very much cast

down, as you may see. Indeed, to speak truth, and without disguise, I think my heart is broken. Every one knows that a breaking heart is incurable."

"You take it too much to yourself, *alanna dhas*," said her mother; "but you must keep up your spirits, darlin'; time will work wondhers."

"With me, mother, it never can."

"Una," said John, with affected gravity, "you have just made two assertions, which I can prove to be false."

She looked at him with surprise.

"False, dear John?"

"Yes, false, dear Una; and I will prove it, as I said. In the first place, there *is* a cure for a breaking heart; and in the next place, time *will* work wonders, even with you."

"Well," she said, assuming a look of sickly cheerfulness, "I should be very ungrateful, John, if I did not smile for you, even when you don't smile yourself, after all the ingenious plans you take to keep up my spirits."

"My dear girl," replied John, "I will not trifle with you; I ask you now to be firm, and say whether you are capable of hearing good news."

"Good news to me! I hope I am, John."

"Well, then, I have to inform you that this day Bartle Flanagan has confessed that it was *not* Connor O'Donovan who burned our haggard, but himself. The sheriff has written to inform the government, so that we will have Connor back again with a name and character unsullied."

She looked at him for a moment, then at her parents; and her cheek still got paler, and after a slight pause she burst out into a vehement and irrepressible paroxysm of grief.

"John, is this true?" inquired his father.

"*Vic na hoiah!* John—blessed mother—thrue?—but is it, John? is it?"

"Indeed it is, mother; the villain, now that he has no hope of his life, confessed it this day."

"God knows, darlin'," exclaimed the Bodagh's warm-hearted wife, now melting into tears herself, "it's no wondher you should cry tears of joy for this. God wouldn't be above us, *acushla oge machree*, or he'd sind brighter days before your young and innocent heart."

Una could not speak, but wept on; the grief she felt, however, became gradually milder in its character, until, at length, her violent sobbings were hushed; and although the tears still flowed, they flowed in silence.

"We will have him back, sartinly," said the Bodagh; "Don't cry, dear, we'll have him here agin, with no desateful villin to swear away his life."

"I could die now," said the noble-minded girl; "I think I could die now, without ever seeing him. His name is cleared and will be cleared; his character untainted; and that is dearer to me even than his love. Oh, I knew it, I knew it," she fervently exclaimed; "and when all the world was against him, I was for him; I and his own mother; for we were the two that knew his heart best."

"Well," said John, smiling, "if I brought you gloomy news once, I believe I brought you pleasant news twice. You remember when I told you he was not to die."

"Indeed, John dear, you are the best brother that ever God blessed a sister with; but I hope this is not a dream. Oh, can it be possible? and when awake in the morning, will it be to the sorrowful heart I had yesterday? I am bewildered. After this, who should ever despair in the goodness of God, or think that the trial he sends but for a time is to last always."

"Bridget," said the gracious Bodagh, "we must have a glass of punch; an' upon my reputaytion, Oona, we'll drink to his speedy return."

"Troth, an' Oona will take a glass herself this night," added her mother; "an' thanks be to goodness, she'll be our *colleen dhas dhun* agin—won't you have a glass, asthore machree?"

"I'll do anything that any of you wishes me, mother," replied Una.

She gave, as she uttered the words, a slight sob, which turned their attention once more to her; but they saw at once, by the brilliant sparkle of her eyes, that it was occasioned by the unexpected influx of delight and happiness which were accumulating round her heart.

"Mother," she said, "will *you* make the punch for them to-night? I cannot rest till I let poor Biddy Nulty know what has happened. Cleared!" she added, exultingly, "his name and character cleared!"

The beautiful girl then left the room, and short as was the space which elapsed since she heard her brother's communication, they could not help being struck at the light elastic step with which she tripped out of it. Brief, however, as the period was, she had time to cast aside the burden of care which had pressed her down, and changed her easy pace to the slow tread of sorrow.

"God help our poor colleen dhas," exclaimed her mother, "but she's the happy crature this night."

"And happy will the hearth be where her light will shine," replied her father, quoting a beautiful Irish proverb to that effect.

"The ways of Providence are beautiful when seen aright or understood," said her brother; "she was too good to be punished, but not too perfect to be tried. Their calamitous separation will enhance the value of their affection for each other when they meet; for pure and exalted as her love for Connor is, yet I am proud to say that Connor is worthy of her and it."

That night her mother observed that Una spent a longer time than usual at her devotions, and on looking

into her room when passing, she saw her on her knees, and heard her again sobbing with the grateful sense of a delighted heart. She did not again address her, and they all retired to happier slumbers than they had enjoyed for many a night."

Our readers have already had proofs of Una's consideration, generosity, and uncommon delicacy. Her conduct at the approach of her lover's trial, and again when he was about to leave her and his country for ever, they cannot, we are sure, have forgotten. When her brother had shown the official communication from the castle, in which government expressed its intention of bringing Connor and his parents home at its own expense, the Bodagh and his wife, knowing that the intended husband of their daughter possessed no means of supporting her, declared, in order to remove any shade of anxiety from her mind, that O'Donovan, after their marriage, should live with themselves, for they did not wish, they said, that Una should be separated from them. This was highly gratifying to her, but beyond her lover's welfare, whether from want of thought or otherwise, it is not easy to say, she saw that their sympathy did not extend. This troubled her, for she knew how Connor loved his parents, and how much any want of comfort they might feel would distress him. She accordingly consulted with her ever-faithful confidant, John, and begged of him to provide for them at her own expense a comfortable dwelling, and to furnish it as near as might be practicable to the manner in which their former one had been furnished. She also desired him to say nothing to their parents about this, "for I intend," she added, "to have a little surprise for them all."

About the time, therefore, when the vessel in which they were to arrive was expected, a snug, well furnished house, convenient to the Bodagh's, amply stored with provisions, and kept by a daughter of Nogher M'Cormick's, awaited them. Nothing that could ren-

der them easy was omitted, and many things also were procured in the shape of additional comforts to which they had not been accustomed before.

At length the arrival of the much-wished-for vessel was announced, and John O'Brien, after having agreed to let Una know by letter where the Bodagh's car should meet them, mounted the day coach, and proceeded to welcome home his future brother-in-law, prepared, at the same time, to render both to him and his parents, whatever assistance they stood in need of, either pecuniary or otherwise, after so long and so trying a voyage.

The meeting of two such kindred spirits may be easily conceived. There were few words wasted between them, but they were full of truth and sincerity.

"My noble fellow," said O'Brien, clasping Connor's hand, "she is at home with a beating heart and a happy one, waiting for you."

"John," replied the other, fervently, "the wealth of the universe is below her price. I'm not worthy of her, except in this, that I could shed my heart's dearest blood to do her good."

"Little you know of it yet," said the other, smiling significantly, "but you will soon."

It appeared that Fardorougha's wife had borne the hardships of both voyages better than her husband, who, as his son sensibly observed, had been too much worn down before by the struggle between his love for him and his attachment to his money.

"His care is now nearly over," said Connor, with a sigh. "Indeed, he is so far gone, that I don't know how to lave him, while I'm providin' a home for him to die in."

"That is already done," replied O'Brien; "Una did not forget it. They have a house near ours, furnished with everything that can contribute to their comfort."

Connor, on hearing this, paused, and his cheek became pale and red alternately, with emotion, his nerves

thrilled, and a charm of love and pleasure diffused itself over his whole being.

"There is no use in speaking," he exclaimed; "love her more than I do I cannot."

In consequence of Fardorougha's illness they were forced to travel by slower and shorter stages than they intended. O'Brien, however, never left them; for he knew that, should the miser die on the way, they would require the presence and services of a friend. In due time, however, they reached the place appointed by John for the car to meet them; and ere many hours had passed, they found themselves once more in what they could call their own home. From the miser's mind the power of observing external nature seemed to have been altogether withdrawn; he made no observation whatever upon the appearance and novelty of the scene to which he was conveyed, or of the country through which he passed; but when put to bed he covered himself with the bedclothes, and soon fell into a slumber.

"Connor," said his mother, "your father's now asleep, an' won't miss you; lose no time, thin, in goin' to see *her*; an' may God strinthen you both for such a meetin'!"

He and O'Brien accordingly went.

The Bodagh was out, but Una and her mother were sitting in the parlour, when the noise of a jaunting-car was heard driving up to the door; Una involuntarily looked out of the window, and seeing two persons, she started up, and putting her hands together, hysterically exclaimed, "Oh, mother, dear mother, assist me, assist me—he's here." Her mother caught her in her arms; and at the same moment Connor rushed in. Una could only extend her arms to receive him; he clasped her to his heart, and she sobbed several times rapidly, and then her head sank upon his bosom.

Her mother and brother were both weeping.

Her lover looked down upon her, and as he hung

over the beautiful and insensible girl, the tears which he shed copiously bedewed her face. After a few minutes she recovered, and her brother, with his usual delicacy, beckoned to his mother to follow him out of the room, knowing that the presence of a third person is always a restraint upon the interchange of even the tenderest and purest affection. Both, therefore, were then left together; and we, in like manner, must allow that delicious interview to be sacred only to themselves, and unprophaned by the gaze and presence of a spectator.

The Bodagh and Mrs. O'Brien were highly gratified at the steps their children had taken to provide for the comfort of Fardorougha and his wife. The next day the whole family paid them a visit, but on seeing the Miser, it was clear that his days were numbered. During the most vigorous and healthy period of his life, he had always been thin and emaciated; but now, when age, illness, the severity of a six months' voyage, and, last of all, the hand of death, left their wasting traces upon his person, it would indeed be difficult to behold any image of penury more significant of its spirit. We must, however, do the old man justice. Since the loss of his money, or rather since the trial and conviction of his son, or probably since the operation of both events upon his heart, he had seldom, if ever, by a single act or expression, afforded any proof that his avarice survived, or was able to maintain its hold upon him, against the shock which awakened the full power of a father's love.

About ten o'clock A.M. on the fourth day after their arrival, Connor, who had ran over to the Bodagh's, was hurriedly sent for by his mother, who desired Nelly M'Cormick to say that his father incessantly called for him, and that he must not lose a moment in coming. He returned immediately with her, and found the old man reclining in bed, supported by his wife, who sat behind him.

"Is my boy comin'?" he said, in a thin, wiry, worn voice, but in words which, to any person near him, were as distinct almost as ever: "is my boy Connor comin'?"

"I am here, father," replied Connor, who had just entered the room: "sure I am always with you."

"You are, you are," said he, "you were ever an' always good. Give me your hand, Connor."

Connor did so.

"Connor, darlin," he proceeded, "don't be like me. I loved money too much; I set my heart on it, an' you know how it was taken away from me. The priest yestherday laid it upon me, out of regard to my reignin' sin, as he called it, to advise you, afore I'd die, against lovin' the wealth o' this world too much."

"I hope I never will, father. Your own misfortune ought to be a warnin' to me."

"Ay, you may say that; it's I indeed that was misfortunate; but it was all through P——, an' that nest o' robbers, the Isle o' Man."

"Don't think of him or it now, my dear father; don't be discomposin' your mind about them."

"He was a villin'—a deep villin'; but that's not the thing. Your mother was spakin' to the priest about masses for my sowl. Now, Connor, I know that they'll take far less than they'll ax. I know that, for I remember batin' down Father Fogarty myself, from two-an'-sixpence a mass to a shillin'—it was for my own father's sowl, an' I saved the price of a pair o' shoes by it, and had the same number o' masses sed still. That was makin' a bargin' the right way."

Connor and his mother exchanged a melancholy glance, and the latter, who, on witnessing his frame of mind, could not help shedding bitter tears, said to him,

"Fardorougha dear, Fardorougha, asthore machree, won't you be guided by me? You're now on your death-bed, an' think of God's marcy—it's *that* you stand most in need of. Sure, avourneen, if you had all the

money you ever had you couldn't bring a penny of it where you're goin'."

"Well, but I'm givin' Connor an advice that'll sarve him. Sure I'm not biddin' him to set his heart on it, for I tould the priest I wouldn't; but is that any raison why he'd not *save* it? I didn't tell the priest that I wouldn't bid him do *that*."

"Father," said Connor, "for the love of God put these thoughts out of your head and mind."

"So, Connor dear," proceeded the old man, not attending to him; "in makin' a bargain wid the priest, bate him down, or he'll *do* you, an' in makin' any bargain, Connor, be sure to make as *hard* a one as you can; but for all that be honest, an' never lind a penny o' money widout intherest and good security."

"I think he's wandherin'," whispered his mother. "Oh grant it may be so, marciful Jasus, this day!"

"Honor ahagur."

"Well, darlin', what is it?"

"There's another thing that throubles me—I niver knew what it was to feel myself far from my own till now."

"How is that, dear?"

"My bones won't rest in my own counthry; I won't sleep wid them that belong to me. How will I lie in a sthrange grave, an' in a far land? Oh, will no one bring me back to my own!"

The untutored sympathies of neither wife nor son could resist this beautiful and affecting trait of nature, and the undying love of one's own land, emanating, as it did, so unexpectedly, from a heart otherwise insensible to the ordinary tendernesses of life.

"Sure you are at home, avourneen," said Honor; "an' will rest wid your friends and relations that have gone before you."

"No," said he, "I'm not: I'm far away from them; but now I feel more comforted; I have one wid me

that's dearer than them all. Connor and I will sleep together; won't we, Connor?"

This affectionate transition from every other earthly object to himself, so powerfully smote the son's heart, that he could not reply.

"What ails him, Connor?" said his wife. "Help me to keep up his head—Saver above!"

Connor raised his head, but saw at a glance that the last struggle in the old man's heart was over. The miser was no more.

Little now remains to be said. The grief for old age, though natural, is never abiding. The miser *did* sleep with his own; and after a decent period allotted to his memory, need we say that our hero and heroine, if we may be permitted so to dignify them, were crowned in the enjoyment of those affections which were so severely tested, and at the same time so worthy of their sweet reward.

Ned M'Cormick and Biddy Nulty followed their example, and occupied the house formerly allotted to Fardorougha and his wife. John O'Brien afterward married; and the Bodagh, reserving a small but competent farm for himself, equally divided his large holdings between his son and son-in-law. On John's moiety he built a suitable house; but Una and her husband, and Honor, all live with themselves, and we need scarcely say, for it is not long since we spent a week with them, that the affection of the old people for their grandchildren is quite enthusiastic, and that the grandchildren, both boys and girls, are worthy of it.

THE END.

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